

823
R27ch
1868
v.2



LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS

823

R27ch

1868

v. 2

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

The person charging this material is responsible for its renewal or return to the library on or before the due date.

The minimum fee for a lost item is **\$125.00, \$300.00** for bound journals.

Theft, mutilation, and underlining of books are reasons for disciplinary action and may result in dismissal from the University. *Please note: self-stick notes may result in torn pages and lift some inks.*

Renew via the Telephone Center at 217-333-8400, 846-262-1510 (toll-free) or circlib@uiuc.edu.

Renew online by choosing the **My Account** option at: <http://www.library.uiuc.edu/catalog/>

NOV 16 2008

THE CHILD WIFE:

A Tale of the Two Worlds.

BY

CAPTAIN MAYNE REID,

AUTHOR OF "THE SCALP HUNTERS."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

WARD, LOCK, & TYLER,

WARWICK HOUSE,

PATERNOSTER ROW.

1868.

[The right of Translation is reserved.]

21529

823

R27ch

1868

v. 2

CONTENTS OF VOL. II.

CHAP.	PAGE
I. ELJEN KOSSUTH!	1
II. THE BROKEN SWORDS	12
III. A TOUR IN SEARCH OF A TITLE	22
IV. THE LOST LORD	33
V. INSIDE THE TUILERIES.	50
VI. IN THE HOTEL DE LOUVRE	60
VII. ON THE BOULEVARDS	69
VIII. A NATION'S MURDER	84
IX. "I'LL COME TO YOU!"	92
X. TO THE PRISON	104
XI. TO THE EMBASSY	113
XII. DEATH UPON THE DRUM-HEAD	120
XIII. THE TWO FLAGS	128
XIV. ONCE MORE IN WESTBOURNE.	140
XV. A CAUTIOUS BARONET	152
XVI. A SCENE IN PARK LANE	164
XVII. THE POWER OF A PRETTY FACE	171
XVIII. TO THE COUNTRY	178
XIX. AT THE MEET	187

CHAP.	PAGE
XX. IN THE COVER	194
XXI. A RECREANT SPORTSMAN	204
XXII. JUST FIFTEEN	212
XXIII. THE DINNER	223
XXIV. THE DANCE	233
XXV. A JEALOUS COUSIN	241
XXVI. UNDER THE DEODARA	252
XXVII. THE ILLUSTRIOUS EXILE	267
XXVIII. A KINGLY SCHEME OF REVOLUTION	277
XXIX. A DESIRABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD	284
XXX. A TENANT SECURED	295
XXXI. A DRESS REHEARSAL	303

THE CHILD WIFE.



CHAPTER I.

ELJEN KOSSUTH!

AN autumn sun was just rising over the plains of the yellow Theiss, when two travellers, issuing from the gates of the old fortified city of Arad, took their way toward the village of Vilagos, some twenty miles distant.

It is scarce necessary to say they were on horseback. Men do not journey afoot on the plains of the "Pusztá."

Their military costume was in keeping with the scene around. Not as it would have been in its normal and usual state, with the

ihaz quietly attending his swine drove, and the *csiko* galloping after his half-wild colts and cattle. For Arad was now the headquarters of the Hungarian army, and the roads around it hourly echoed the tread of the Honved, and hoofstoke of the hussar.

The patriot force of less than thirty thousand men had moved upon Vilagos, there to meet the Austro-Russian advance, of just four times their number; Geörgei the commanding general on one side, and Rüdiger on the other.

The two horsemen had reached Arad but the night before, coming from the west. They had arrived too late to go out with the patriot troops, and seemed now hurrying on to overtake them.

Though in uniform, as we have already said, it was not that belonging to any branch of the Hungarian service. No more did it resemble any one of the varied military

costumes worn by the allied enemy. Both were habited very much alike; in simple undress frocks of dark blue cloth, with gold-lace pantaloons of brighter blue, and banded forage-caps.

With Colt's revolver pistols—then an arm scarce known—worn in a holstered waist-belt, steel sabres hanging handy against their thighs, and short Jäger rifles slung, *en bandolier*, behind them, the dress looked warlike enough; and, on whatever side, it was evident the two travellers intended fighting.

This was further manifest from their anxious glances cast ahead, and the way they pressed their horses forward, as if fearing to be too late for the field.

They were of different ages; one over forty, the other about twenty-five.

"I don't like the look of things about Arad," said the elder, as they checked up for a time, to breathe their horses.

“Why, count?” asked his companion.

“There seems to be a bad electricity in the air—a sort of general distrust.”

“In what, or whom?”

“In Geörgei. I could see that the people have lost confidence in him. They even suspect that he’s playing traitor, and has thoughts of surrendering to the enemy.”

“What! Geörgei—their favourite general! Is he not so?”

“Of the old army, yes. But not of the new levies, or the people. In my opinion, the worst thing that could have happened to them is his having become so. It’s the old story of regulars *versus* volunteers. He hates the Honveds, and Kossuth for creating them, just as in our little Mexican skirmish, there was a jealousy between West Pointers and the newly-raised regiments.

“There are thousands of donkeys in Hungary, as in the United States, who believe

that to be a soldier a man must go through some sort of a routine training—forgetting all about Cromwell of England, Jackson of America, and a score of the like that might be quoted. Well, these common minds, running in the usual groove, believe that Görgei, because he was once an officer in the Austrian regular army, should be the trusted man of the time; and they've taken him up, and trusted him without further questioning. I know him well. We were at the military school together. A cool, scheming fellow, with the head of a chemist and the heart of an alchemist. Of himself he has accomplished nothing yet. The brilliant victories gained on the Hungarian side—and brilliant have they been—have all been due to the romantic enthusiasm of these fiery Magyars, and the dash of such generals as Nagy Sandor, Damjanich, and Guyon. There can be no doubt that, after the successes on the Upper Danube,

the patriot army could have marched unmolested into Vienna, and there dictated terms to the Austrian Empire. The emperor's panic-stricken troops were absolutely evacuating the place, when, instead of a pursuing enemy, news came after them that the victorious general had turned back with his whole army, to lay siege to the fortress of Ofen! To capture an insignificant garrison of less than six thousand men! Six weeks were spent in this absurd side movement, contrary to the counsels of Kossuth, who had never ceased to urge the advance on Vienna. Geörgei did just what the Austrians wanted him to do — giving their northern allies time to come down; and down they have come."

"But Kossuth was Governor—Dictator! Could he not command the advance you speak of?"

"He commanded it all he could, but was

not obeyed. Geörgei had already sapped his influence, by poisoning the minds of the military leaders against him—that is, the factious who adhered to himself, the old regulars, whom he had set against the new levies and Honveds. ‘Kossuth is not a soldier, only a lawyer,’ said they; and this was sufficient. For all their talk, Kossuth has given more proofs of soldiership and true generalship than Geörgei and his whole clique. He has put an army of two hundred thousand men in the field; armed and equipped it. And he created it absolutely out of nothing! The patriots had only two hundred pounds weight of gunpowder, and scarce such a thing as a gun, when this rising commenced. And the saltpetre was dug out of the mine, and the iron smelted, and the cannon cast. Ay, in three months there was a force in the field such as Napoleon would have been proud of. My dear captain, there

is more proof of military genius in this, than in the winning of a dozen battles. It was due to Kossuth alone. Alone he accomplished it all—every detail of it. Louis Kossuth not a general, indeed! In the true sense of the word, there has been none such since Napoleon. Even in this last affair of Ofen, it is now acknowledged, he was right; and that they should have listened to his cry, ‘On to Vienna!’”

“Clearly it has been a sad blunder.”

“Not so clearly, captain; not so clearly. I wish it were. There is reason to fear it is worse.”

“What mean you, count?”

“I mean, treason.”

“Ha!”

“The turning back for that useless siege looks confoundedly like it. And this constantly retreating down the right bank of the Theiss, without crossing over and forming a

junction with Sandor! Every day the army melting away, becoming reduced by thousands! *Sacré!* if it be so, we've had our long journey for nothing; and poor Liberty will soon see her last hopeless struggle on the plains of the Puszta, perhaps her last in all Europe! *Ach!*"

The count, as he made this exclamation, drove the spur hard against the ribs of his horse, and broke off into a gallop, as if determined to take part in that struggle, however hopeless.

The younger man, seemingly inspired by the same impulse, rode rapidly after.

Then gallop was kept up until the spire of Vilagos came in sight, shooting up over the groves of olive and acacia embowering the Puszta village.

Outside on the skirts of the far-spreading town they could see tents pitched upon the plain, with standards floating over them—

cavalry moving about in squadrons—infantry standing in serried ranks—here and there horsemen in hussar uniforms hurrying from point to point, their loose dolmans trailing behind them. They could hear the rolling of drums, the braying of bugles, and, away far beyond, the booming of great guns.

“Who goes there?” came the abrupt hail of a sentry speaking in the Magyar tongue, while a soldier in Honved dress showed himself in the door of a shepherd’s hut. He was the spokesman of a picket-guard concealed within the house.

“Friends!” answered the Austrian count, in the same language in which the hail had been given. “Friends to the cause. *Eljen Kossuth!*”

At the magic words the soldier lowered his carbine, while his half dozen comrades came crowding out from their concealment.

A pass to headquarters, obtained by the count in Arad, made the parley short, and the two travellers continued their journey amidst cries of "Eljen Kossuth!"

CHAPTER II.

THE BROKEN SWORDS.

IN half an hour afterwards, Count Roseveldt and Captain Maynard—for it was they who were thus rapidly travelling—reached Vilagos, and passed on to the camp of the Hungarian army.

They halted near its centre, in front of the marquee occupied by its commander-in-chief. They had arrived just in time to witness a remarkable scene—none more so on military record.

Around them were officers of all ranks, and of every conceivable arm of service. They were standing in groups talking ex-

citedly, now and then an individual crossing hastily from one to the other.

There was all the evidence of warlike preparation, but as if under some mysterious restraint. This could be read in scowling looks and mutinous mutterings.

In the distance was heard the continuous roaring of artillery.

They knew whence it came, and what was causing it. They knew it was from Temesvar, where Nagy Sandor with his attenuated corps of heroes was holding the large army of Rüdiger in check.

Yes, their brilliant and beloved comrade, Nagy Sandor, that splendid cavalry officer—before whom even the *beau sabreur* of France sinks into a second place—was fighting an unequal fight!

It was the thought of this that was causing the dark looks and angry mutterings.

Going up to a group of officers, the count

asked for an explanation. They were in hussar uniforms, and appeared to be more excited than the others.

One of them sprang forward, and grasped him by the hand, exclaiming :

“ Roseveldt ?”

It was an old comrade, who had recognized him.

“ There’s some trouble among you ?” said the count, scarce staying to return the salutation. “ What is it, my dear friend ?”

“ You hear those guns ?”

“ Of course I do.”

“ It’s the brave Sandor fighting against no end of odds. And this scheming chemist won’t give us the order to go to his assistance. He stays inside his tent like some Oracle of Delphi. Dumb, too, for he don’t make a response. Would you believe it, Roseveldt ; we suspect him of treason ?”

“ If you do,” responded the count, “ you’re

great fools to wait for his bringing it to maturity. You should advance without his orders. For my part, and I can speak, too, for my comrade here, I shan't stay here while there's fighting farther on. Our cause is the same as yours; and we've come several thousand miles to draw swords in it. We were too late for the Baden affair; and by staying here with you we may again get disappointed. Come, Maynard! *We* have no business at Vilagos. Let us go on to Temes-var!"

Saying this, the count strode brusquely back toward his horse, still under the saddle, the captain keeping pace with him. Before they could mount, there arose a scene that caused them to stand by their stirrups, holding their bridles in hand.

The hussar officers, among whom were several of high rank, generals and colonels, had overheard the speeches of Roseveldt.

The count's friend had made them acquainted with his name.

It needed not for them to know his title, to give influence to what he had said. His words were like red-hot cinders pitched into a barrel of gunpowder, and almost as instantaneous was the effect.

“Geörgei *must* give the order!” cried one, “or we shall advance without it. What say you, comrades?”

“We’re all agreed!” responded a score of voices, the speakers clutching at their sword-hilts, and facing toward the marquee of the commander-in-chief.

“Listen!” said their leader, an old general, with steel-grey moustaches sweeping back to his ears. “You hear that? Those are the guns of Rüdiger. Too well do I know their accursed tongues. Poor Sandor’s ammunition is all spent. He must be in retreat!”

“We shall stop it!” simultaneously ex-

claimed a dozen. "Let us demand the order to advance! To his tent, comrades! to his tent!"

There could be no mistaking which tent; for, with the cry still continuing, the hussar officers rushed toward the marquee—the other groups pouring in, and closing around it, after them.

Several rushed inside; their entrance succeeded by loud words, in tones of expostulation.

They came out again, Geörgei close following. He looked pale, half-affrighted, though it was perhaps less fear than the consciousness of a guilty intent.

He had still sufficient presence of mind—to conceal it.

"Comrades!" he said, with an appealing look at the faces before him, "my children! Surely you can trust to me? Have I not risked my life for your sake—for the sake of

our beloved Hungary? I tell you it would be of no use to advance. It would be madness, ruin. We are here in an advantageous position. We must stay and defend it! Believe me, 'tis our only hope."

The speech so earnest—so apparently sincere—caused the mutineers to waver. Who could doubt the man, so compromised with Austria?

The old officer, who led them, did.

"Thus, then!" he cried, perceiving their defection. , 'Thus shall I defend it!"

Saying this, he whipped his sabre from its sheath; and grasping it hilt and blade, he broke the weapon across his knee—flinging the fragments to the earth!

It was the friend of Roseveldt who did this.

The example was followed by several others amidst curses and tears. Yes; strong men, old soldiers, heroes on that day, at Vilagos, were seen to weep.

The count was again getting into his stirrup, when a shout, coming from the outer edge of the encampment, once more caused him to keep still. All eyes were turned toward the sentry who had shouted, seeking the explanation. It was given not by the sentinel, but something beyond.

Far off, men mounted and afoot were seen approaching over the plain. They came on in scattered groups, in long straggling line, their banners borne low and trailing. They were the *débris* of that devoted band, who had so heroically held Temesvar. Their gallant leader was along with them, in the rear-guard—still contesting the ground by inches, against the pursuing cavalry of Rüdiger!

The old soldier had scarce time to regret having broken his sword, when the van swept into the streets of Vilagos, and soon after the last link of the retreating line.

It was the final scene in the struggle for Hungarian independence !

No ; not the last ! We chronicle without thought. There was another—one other to be remembered to all time, and, as long as there be hearts to feel, with a sad, painful bitterness.

I am not writing a history of the Hungarian war—that heroic struggle for national independence—in valour and devotedness perhaps never equalled upon the earth. Doing so, I should have to detail the tricks and subterfuges to which the traitor Geörgei had to resort before he could deceive his betrayed followers, and, with safety to himself, deliver them over to the infamous enemy. I speak only of that dread morn—the 6th day of October—when *thirteen general officers*, every one of them the victor in some sternly-contested field, were strung up by the neck, as though they had been pirates or murderers !

And among them was the brave Damjanich, strung up in spite of his shattered leg; the silent, serious Perezel, the noble Aulich, and, perhaps, most regretted of all, the brilliant Nagy Sandor! It was in truth a terrible taking of vengeance—a wholesale hanging of heroes, such as the world never saw before!

What a contrast between this fiendish outpouring of monarchical spite against revolutionists in a good cause, and the mercy lately shown by republican conquerors to the chiefs of a rebellion *without cause at all!*

Maynard and Roseveldt did not stay to be spectators of this tragical finale. To the count there was danger upon Hungarian soil—once more become Austrian—and with despondent hearts the two revolutionary leaders turned their faces towards the West, sad to think that their swords must remain unsheathed, without tasting the blood of either traitor or tyrant!

CHAPTER III.

A TOUR IN SEARCH OF A TITLE.

"I'M sick of England—I am!"

"Why, cousin, you said the same of America!"

"No; only of Newport. And if I did, what matter? I wish I were back in it. Anywhere but here, among these bulls and bull-dogs. Give me New York over all cities in the world."

"Oh! I agree with you there—that do I—both State and city, if you like."

It was Julia Girdwood that spoke first, and Cornelia Inskip who replied.

They were seated in a handsome apart-

ment—one of a suite in the Clarendon Hotel, London.

“Yes;” pursued the first speaker; “there one has at least some society; if not the *élite*, still sufficiently polished for companionship. Here there is none—absolutely none—outside the circle of the aristocracy. Those merchants’ wives and daughters we’ve been compelled to associate with, rich as they are, and grand as they deem themselves, are to me simply insufferable. They can think of nothing but their Queen, and talk of nothing but the Duchess of Sutherland!”

“That’s true.”

“And I tell you, Cornelia, if a peeress or the most obscure thing with ‘lady’ tacked to her name but bows to one of them, it is remembered throughout their life, and talked of every day among their connections. Only think of that old banker where mamma took us to dine the other day. He had one of the

Queen's slippers framed in a glass case, and placed conspicuously upon his drawing-room mantel-shelf. And with what gusto the old snob descanted upon it! How he came to get possession of it; the price he paid; and his exquisite self-gratulation at being able to leave it as a valued heirloom to his children—snobbish as himself! Faugh! 'Tis a flunkeyism intolerable. Among American merchants, one is at least spared such experience as that. Even our humblest shopkeepers would scorn so to exhibit themselves!"

"True, true!" assented Cornelia; who remembered her own father an humble shopkeeper in Poughkeepsie, and knew that *he* would have scorned it.

"Yes," continued Julia, returning to her original theme, "of all cities in the world, give me New York. I can say of it, as Byron did of England, 'With all thy faults, I love thee still!' though I suspect when the great

poet penned that much-quoted line, he must have been very tired of Italy and the stupid Countess Guiccioli."

"Ha—ha—ha!" laughed the Poughkeepsian cousin, "what a girl you are, Julia! Well, I'm glad you like our dear native New York."

"Who wouldn't, with its gay, pleasant people, and their cheerful give and take? Many faults it has, I admit; bad municipal management—wholesale political corruption. These are but spots on the outward skin of its social life, and will one day be cured. Its great, generous heart, sprung from Hibernia, is still uncontaminated.

"Hurrah! hurrah!" cried Cornelia, springing up from her seat and clapping her little hands. "I'm glad, cousin, to hear you speak thus of the Irish!"

It will be remembered that she was the daughter of one.

“Yes;” said Julia, for the third time; “New York, of all places, for me! I’m now convinced it’s the finest city in the world!”

“Don’t be so quick in your conclusions, my love! Wait till you’ve seen Paris! Perhaps you may change your mind!”

It was Mrs. Girdwood who made these remarks, entering the room at the conclusion of her daughter’s rhapsody.

“I’m sure I won’t, mother. Nor you neither. We’ll find Paris, just as we’ve found London; the same selfishness, the same social distinctions, the same flunkeyism. I’ve no doubt all monarchical countries are alike.”

“What are you talking about, child? France is now a republic.”

“A nice republic, with an Emperor’s nephew for its President—or rather its Dictator! Every day, as the papers tell us, robbing the people of their rights!”

“Well, my daughter, with that we’ve got

nothing to do. No doubt these revolutionary hot-heads need taming down a little, and a Napoleon should be the man to do it. I'm sure we'll find Paris a very pleasant place. The old titled families, so far from being swept off by the late revolution, are once more holding up their heads. 'Tis said the new ruler encourages them. We can't fail to get acquainted with some of *them*. It's altogether different from the cold-blooded aristocracy of England."

The last remark was made in a tone of bitterness. Mrs. Girdwood had been now several months in London; and though stopping at the Clarendon Hotel—the caravanseraï of aristocratic travellers—she had failed to get introduction to the titled of the land.

The American Embassy had been polite to her, both Minister and Secretary—the latter, noted for his urbanity to all, but especially to his own countrymen, or countrywomen, with-

out distinction of class. The Embassy had done all that could be done for an American lady travelling without introductions. But however rich and accomplished, however beautiful the two girls in her train, Mrs. Girdwood could not be presented at Court, her antecedents not being known.

It is true a point might have been strained in her favour; but the American ambassador of that day was as true a toadeater to England's aristocracy as could have been found in England itself, and equally fearful of becoming compromised by his introductions.

We need not give his name. The reader skilful in diplomatic records can no doubt guess it.

Under these circumstances, the ambitious widow had to submit to a disappointment.

She found little difficulty in obtaining introductions to England's commonalty. Her riches secured this. But the gentry—these

were even less accessible than the exclusives of Newport—the J.'s, and the L.'s, and the B.'s. Titled or untitled, they were all the same. She discovered, that a simple country squire was as unapproachable as a peer of the realm—earl, marquis, or duke!

“Never mind, my girls!” was her consolatory speech, to daughter and niece, when the scales first fell from her eyes. “His lordship will soon be here, and then it will be all right.”

“His lordship” meant Mr. Swinton, who had promised to follow them in the “next steamaw.”

But the next steamer came with no such name as Swinton on its passenger list, nor any one bearing the title of “lord.”

And the next, and the next, and some half dozen others, and still no Swinton, either reported by the papers, or calling at the Clarendon Hotel!

Could an accident have happened to the nobleman, travelling incognito? Or, what caused more chagrin to Mrs. Girdwood to conjecture, had he forgotten his promise?

In either case he ought to have written. A gentleman would have done so—unless dead.

But no such death had been chronicled in the newspapers. It could not have escaped the notice of the retail storekeeper's widow, who each day read the *London Times*, and with care its list of arrivals.

She became at length convinced, that the accomplished nobleman accidentally picked up in Newport, and afterwards entertained by her in her Fifth Avenue house in New York, was either no nobleman at all, or if one, had returned to his own country under another travelling name, and was there fighting shy of her acquaintance!

It was but poor comfort, that many of her

countrymen — travellers like themselves — every day called upon them ; among others Messrs. Lucas and Spiller—such was the cognomen of Mr. Lucas's friend, who, also on a tour of travel, had lately arrived in England.

But neither of them had brought any intelligence, such as Mrs. Girdwood sought. Neither knew anything of the whereabouts of Mr. Swinton !

They had not seen him since the occasion of that dinner in the Fifth Avenue house ; nor had they heard of him again !

It was pretty clear then he had come to England, and was “cutting” them—that is, Mrs. Girdwood and her girls.

This was the mother's reflection.

The thought was enough to drive her out of the country ; and out of it she determined to go, partly in search of that title for her daughter, she had come to Europe to obtain ;

and partly to complete, what some of her countrymen are pleased to call, the “Ew-rópean tower !”

To this the daughter was indifferent, while the niece of course made no objection.

They proceeded upon their travels.

CHAPTER IV.

THE LOST LORD.

TEN days after Mrs. Girdwood had taken her departure from the Clarendon Hotel, a gentleman presented himself to the door-porter of that select hostelry, and put the following inquiry :

“ Is there a family stopping here, by name Girdwood—a middle-aged lady, with two younger—her daughter and niece ; a negro woman for their servant ? ”

“ There *was* such a family—about two weeks ago. They’ve *paid their bill*, and gone away.”

The janitor laid emphasis on the paying of

the bill. It was *his* best evidence of the respectability of the departed guests.

“Do you know where they’ve gone?”

“Haven’t an idea, sir. They left no address. They ’pear to be Yankees—’Mericans, I mean,” said the man, correcting himself, in fear of giving offence. “Very respectable people—ladies, indeed—’specially the young ’uns. I dare say they’ve gone back to the States. That’s what I’ve heerd them call their country.”

“To the States! Surely not?” said the stranger, half questioning himself. “How long since they left the hotel?”

“About a fortnight ago—there or thereabout. I can look at the book and tell you!”

“Pray do!”

The Cerberus of the Clarendon—to an humble applicant for admission into that aristocratic establishment not much milder than he of the seven heads—turned into his

box, and commenced examining the register of departures.

He was influenced to this civility by the aspect of the individual who made the request. To all appearance a "reg'lar gentleman," was the reflection he had indulged in.

"Departures on the 25th," spoke he, reading from the register: "Lord S—— and Lady S——; the Hon. Augustus Stanton; the Duchess of P——; Mrs. Girdwood and family—that's them. They left on the 25th, sir."

"The 25th. At what hour?"

"Well, that I can't remember. You see, there's so many goin' and comin'. From their name being high up on the list, I d'say they went by a mornin' train."

"You're sure they left no note for any one?"

"I can ask inside. What name?"

“Swinton—Mr. Richard Swinton.”

“Seems to me they inquired for that name, several times. Yes, the old lady did—the mother of the young ladies, I mean. I’ll see if there’s a note.”

The man slipped off towards the office, in the interior of the hotel ; leaving Mr. Swinton, for it was he, upon the door-mat.

The countenance of the ex-guardsman, that had turned suddenly blank, again brightened up. It was at least gratifying to know that he had been inquired for. It was to be hoped there was a note, that would put him on their trace of travel.

“No ; not any,” was the chilling response that came out from the official oracle. “None whatever.”

“You say they made inquiries for a Mr. Swinton. Was it from yourself, may I ask ?”

The question was put seductively, accompanied by the holding out of a cigar-case.

“Thank you, sir,” said the flattered official, accepting the offered weed. “The inquiries were sent down to me from their rooms. It was to ask, if a Mr. Swinton had called, or left any card. They also asked about a lord. They didn’t give his name. There wasn’t any lord—leastwise not for them.”

“Were there any gentlemen in the habit of visiting them? You’ll find that cigar a good one—I’ve just brought them across the Atlantic. Take another? Such weeds are rather scarce here in London.”

“You’re very kind, sir. Thank you!” and the official helped himself to a second.

“Oh, yes; there were several gentlemen used to come see them. I don’t think any of them were lords, though. They might be. The ladies ’peared to be very respectable people. I d’say highly respectable.”

“Do you know the address of any of these gentlemen? I ask the question because the

ladies are relatives of mine, and I might perhaps find out from some of them where they are gone."

"They were all strangers to me; and to the hotel. I've been at this door for ten years, and never saw one of them before."

"Can you recollect how any of them looked?"

"Yes; there was one who came often, and used to go out with the ladies. A thick-set gent with lightish hair, and round full face. Sometimes there was a thin-faced man along with him, a younger gent. They used to take the two young ladies a-ridin'—to Rotten Row; and I think to the Opera."

"Did you learn their names?"

"No, sir. They used to go and come without giving a card; only the first time, and I didn't notice what name was on it. They would ask if Mrs. Girdwood was in, and then go up-stairs to the suite of rooms occupied by

the family. They 'peared to be intimate friends."

Swinton saw he had got all the information the man was capable of imparting. He turned to go out, the hall-keeper obsequiously holding the door.

Another question occurred to him.

"Did Mrs. Girdwood say anything about coming back here—to the hotel I mean?"

"I don't know, sir. If you stop a minute I'll ask."

Another journey to the oracle inside ; another negative response.

"This is cursed luck!" hissed Swinton through his teeth, as he descended the hotel steps and stood upon the flags below. "Cursed luck!" he repeated, as with despondent look and slow, irresolute tread he turned up the street of "our best shopkeepers."

"Lucas with them to a certainty, and that other squirt! I might have known it, from

their leaving New York, without telling me where they were going. They must have followed by the very next steamer; and, hang me, if I don't begin to think that that visit to the gambling-house was a trap—a preconceived plan to deprive me of the chance of getting over after her! By the living G—it has succeeded! Here I am, after months spent in struggling to make up the paltry passage money! And here they are not; and God knows where they are. Curse upon the crooked luck!"

Mr. Swinton's reflections will explain why he had not sooner reported himself at the Bond street hotel, and show the mistake Mrs. Girdwood had made, in supposing he had "cut" them.

The thousand dollars deposited in the New York *faro* bank was all the money he had in the world; and after taking stock of what might be raised upon his wife's jewelry, most

of which was already under the collateral mortgage of the three golden globes, it was found it would only pay ocean passage for one!

As Fan was determined not to be left behind—Broadway having proved less congenial than Regent street—the two had to stay in America, till the price of two cabin tickets could be obtained.

With all Mr. Swinton's talent in the "manipulation of pasteboard," it cost him months to obtain them.

His friend Lucas gone away, he found no more pigeons in America—only hawks!

The land of liberty was not the land for him. Its bird of freedom, type of the falcon tribe, seemed too truly emblematic of its people—certainly of those with whom he had come in contact—and as soon as he could get together enough to pay for a pair of Cunard tickets—second class at that—he took de-

parture for a clime more congenial, both to himself and his beloved.

They had arrived in London with little more than the clothes they stood in; and taken lodgings in that cheap, semi-genteel neighbourhood where almost every street, square, park, place, and terrace, has got Westbourne for its name.

Toward this quarter Mr. Swinton turned his face, after reaching the head of Bond street; and taking a twopenny "bus," he was soon after set down at the Royal Oak, at no great distance from his suburban domicile.

* * * * *

"They're gone!" he exclaimed, stepping inside the late taken apartments, and addressing himself to a beautiful woman, their sole occupant.

It was "Fan," in a silk gown, somewhat chafed and stained, but once more a woman's dress! Fan, with her splendid hair almost

grown again—Fan no longer disguised as a valet, but restored to the dignity of a wife!

“Gone! From London, do you mean? Or only the hotel?”

The question told of her being still in her husband’s confidence.

“From both.”

“But you know where, don’t you?”

“I don’t.”

“Do you think they’ve left England?”

“I don’t know what to think. They’ve left the Clarendon on the 25th of last month—ten days ago. And who do you suppose has been there—back and forward to see them?”

“I don’t know.”

“Guess!”

“I can’t.”

She could have given a guess. She had a thought, but she kept it in her own heart, as about the same man she had kept other

thoughts before. Had she spoken it, she would have said, Maynard.

She said nothing, leaving her husband to explain.

He did so, at once undeceiving her.

“Well, it was Lucas. That thick-skulled brute we met in Newport, and afterwards in New York.”

“Aye; better you had never seen him in either place. He proved a useless companion, Dick.”

“I know all that. Perhaps I shall get square with him yet.”

“So they’ve gone; and that, I suppose, will be the end of it. Well, let it be; I don’t care. I’m contented enough to be once more in dear Old England!”

“In cheap lodgings like this?”

“In anything. A hovel here is preferable to a palace in America! I’d rather live in a London garret, in these mean lodgings, if you

like, than be mistress of that Fifth Avenue house you were so delighted to dine in. I hate their republican country !”

The sentiment was appropriate to a pretty “horsebreaker.”

“I’ll be the owner of it yet,” said Swinton, referring not to the country, but the Fifth Avenue house. “I’ll own it, if I have to spend ten years in carrying out the speculation.”

“You still intend going on with it then?”

“Of course I do. Why should I give it up?”

“Perhaps you’ve lost the chance. This Mr. Lucas may have got into the lady’s good graces?”

“Bah! I’ve nothing to fear from him—the common-looking brute! He’s after her, no doubt. What of that? I take it he’s not the style to make much way with Miss Julia Girdwood. Besides, I’ve reason to know the mother won’t have it. If I’ve lost the chance

in any other way, I may thank you for it, madam."

"Me! And how, I should like to know?"

"But for you I might have been here months ago; in good time to have taken steps against their departure; or still better, found some excuse for going along with them. That's what I could have done. It's the time we have lost—in getting together the cash to buy tickets for two."

"Indeed! And I'm answerable for that, I suppose? I think I made up my share. You seem to forget the selling of my gold watch, my rings and bracelets—even to my poor pencil-case!"

"Who gave them to you?"

"Indeed! it's like you to remember it! I wish I had never accepted them."

"And I that I had never given them."

"Wretch!"

“Oh! you’re very good at calling names—ugly ones, too.”

“I’ll call you an uglier still, *coward!*”

This stung him. Perhaps the only epithet that would; for he not only felt that it was true, but that his wife knew it.

“What do you mean?” he asked, turning suddenly red.

“What I say: that you’re a coward—you know you are. You can safely insult a woman; but when a man stands up you daren’t—no, you daren’t say boh to a goose. Remember Maynard!”

It was the first time the taunt had been openly pronounced; though on more than one occasion since the scenes in Newport, she had thrown out hints of a knowledge of that scheme by which he had avoided meeting the man named. He supposed she had only suspicions, and could know nothing of that letter delivered too late. He had taken great

pains to conceal the circumstances. From what she now said, it was evident she knew all.

And she did: for James, the waiter, and other servants, had imparted to her the gossip of the hotel; and this, joined to her own observation of what had transpired, gave the whole story. 'The suspicion that she knew it had troubled Swinton—the certainty maddened him.

“Say that again!” he cried, springing to his feet; “say it again, and by G—, I’ll smash in your skull!”

With the threat he had raised one of the cane chairs, and held it over her head.

Throughout their oft-repeated quarrels, it had never before come to this—the crisis of a threatened blow.

She was neither large nor strong—only beautiful—while the bully was both. But she did not believe he intended to strike; and she

felt that to quail would be to acknowledge herself conquered. Even to fail replying to the defiance.

She did so, with additional acerbity.

“Say what again? Remember Maynard? I needn’t say it; you’re not likely to forget him!”

The words had scarce passed from her lips before she regretted them. At least she had reason: for with a crash, the chair came down upon her head, and she was struck prostrate upon the floor!

CHAPTER V.

INSIDE THE TUILERIES.

THERE is a day in the annals of Paris, that to the limits of all time will be remembered with shame, sorrow, and indignation.

And not only by the people of Paris, but of France—who on that day ceased to be free.

To the Parisians, more especially, was it a day of lamentation; and its anniversary can never pass over the French capital without tears in every house, and trembling in every heart.

It was the *Second of December*, 1851.

On the morning of that day five men were met within a chamber of the Tuileries. It

was the same chamber in which we have described a conspiracy, as having been hatched some months before.

The present meeting was for a similar purpose; but, notwithstanding a coincidence in the number of the conspirators, only one of them was the same. This was the president of the former conclave—the President of France!

And there was another coincidence equally strange—in their titles: for there was a count, a field-marshal, a diplomatist, and a duke, the only difference being that they were now all of one nation—all Frenchmen.

They were the Count de M., the Marshal St. A., the Diplomatist La G., and the Duke of C.

Although, as said, their purpose was very similar, there was a great difference in the men and their mode of discussing it. The former five have been assimilated to a gang of

burglars who had settled the preliminaries for "cracking a crib." Better might this description apply to the conspirators now in session ; and at a still later period, when the housebreakers are about entering on the "job."

Those had conspired with a more comprehensive design—the destruction of Liberty throughout all Europe. These were assembled with similar aim, though it was confined to the liberties of France.

In the former case, the development seemed distant, and would be brought about by brave soldiers fighting on the battle-field. In the latter the action was near, and was entrusted to cowardly assassins in the streets, already prepared for the purpose.

The mode by which this had been done will be made manifest, by giving an account of the scenes that were passing in the chambers occupied by the conspirators.

There was no *persiflage* of speech, or exchange of light drolleries, as in that conclave enlivened by the conversation of the English viscount. The time was too serious for joking; the occasion for the contemplated murder too near.

Nor was there the same tranquillity in the chamber. Men came and went; officers armed and in full uniform. Generals, colonels, and captains were admitted into the room, as if by some sign of freemasonry, but only to make reports or receive orders, and then out again.

And he who gave these orders was not the President of France, commander-in-chief of its armies, but another man of the five in that room, and for the time, greater than he!

It was the Count de M——.

But for him, perhaps, that conspiracy might never have been carried to a success, and France might still have been free!

It was a strange, terrible crisis, and the "man of a mission," standing back to the fire, with split coat-tails, was partially appalled by it. Despite repeated drinks, and the constant smoking of a cigar, he could not conceal the tremour that was upon him.

De M—— saw it, and so did the murderer of Algerine Arabs, once strolling-player, now field-marshal of France.

"Come!" cried the sinful but courageous Count, "there must be no half measures—no weak backslidings! We've resolved upon this thing, and we must go through with it! Which of you is afraid?"

"Not I," answered St. A——.

"Nor I," said La G——, *ci-devant* billiard-sharper of Leicester Square, London.

"I'm not afraid," said the Duke. "But do you think it is right?"

His grace was the only man of the five who had a spark of humanity in his heart.

A poor, weak man, he was only allied with the others in the intimacy of a fast friendship.

“Right?” echoed La G——. “What’s wrong in it? Would it be right to let this *canaille* of demagogues rule Paris—France? That’s what it’ll come to if we don’t act. Now, or never, say I!”

“And I!”

“And all of us!”

“We must do more than say,” said De M——, glancing toward the tamer of the Boulogne eagle, who still stood against the fire-place, looking scared and irresolute. “*We must swear it!*”

“Come, Louis!” he continued, familiarly addressing himself to the Prince President. “We’re all in the same boat here. It’s a case of life or death, and we must stand true to one another. I propose that we *swear* it!”

“I have no objection,” said the nephew of

Napoleon, led on by a man whom his great uncle would have commanded. "I'll make any oath you like."

"Enough!" cried De M——, taking a brace of duelling pistols from the mantelshelf and placing them crosswise on the table, one on top of the other. "There, gentlemen! There's the true Christian symbol, and over it let us make oath, that in this day's work we live or die together!"

"We swear it on the Cross!"

"On the Cross, and by the Virgin!"

"On the Cross, and by the Virgin!"

The oath had scarce died on their lips when the door was once more opened, introducing one of those uniformed couriers who were constantly coming and going.

They were all officers of high rank, and all men with fearless but sinister faces.

"Well, Colonel Gardotte!" asked De M——, without waiting for the President

to speak ; “ how are things going on in the Boulevard de Bastille ? ”

“ Charmingly,” replied the Colonel. “ Another round of champagne, and my fellows will be in the right spirit—ready for anything ! ”

“ Give it them ! Twice if it be needed. Here’s the equivalent for the keepers of the cabarets. If there’s not enough, take their trash on a promise to pay. Say that it’s on account of—Ha ! Lorrillard ! ”

Colonel Gardotte, in brilliant Zouave uniform, was forgotten, or at all events set aside, for a big, bearded man in dirty blouse, at that moment admitted into the room.

“ What is it, *mon brave* ? ”

“ I come to know at what hour we are to commence firing from the barricade ? It’s built now, and we’re waiting for the signal ? ”

Lorrillard spoke half aside, and in a hoarse, hurried whisper.

“Be patient, good Lorrillard!” was the reply. “Give your fellows another glass, and wait till you hear a cannon fired in front of the Madeleine. Take care you don’t get so drunk as to be incapable of hearing it. Also, take care you don’t shoot any of the soldiers who are to attack you, or let them shoot you!”

“I’ll take special care about the last, your countship. A cannon, you say, will be fired by the Madeleine?”

“Yes; discharged twice to make sure—but *you* needn’t wait for the second report. At the first, blaze away with your blank cartridges, and don’t hurt our dear Zouaves. Here’s something for yourself, Lorrillard! Only an earnest of what you may expect when this little skirmish is over.”

The sham-barricader accepted the gold coins passed into his palm; and with a salute such as might have been given by the boatswain

of a buccaneer, he slouched back through the half-opened doorway, and disappeared.

Other couriers continued to come and go, most in military costumes, delivering their divers reports—some of them in open speech, others in mysterious undertone—not a few of them under the influence of drink!

On that day the army of Paris was in a state of intoxication—ready not alone for the suppression of a riot they had been told to prepare for; but for anything—even to the slaughter of the whole Parisian people!

At three P.M. they were quite prepared for this. The champagne and sausages were all consumed. They were again hungry and thirsty, but it was the hunger of the hellhound, and the thirst of the bloodhound.

“The time has come!” said De M—— to his fellow-conspirators. “We may now release them from their leash! Let the gun be fired!”

CHAPTER VI.

IN THE HOTEL DE LOUVRE.

“COME, girls! It’s time for you to be dressing. The gentlemen are due in half an hour.”

The speech was made in a handsome apartment of the Hotel de Louvre, and addressed to two young ladies, in elegant *déshabille*, one of them seated on a *fauteuil*, the other lying full stretch along a sofa.

A negress, with chequered *toque*, was standing near the door, summoned in to assist the young ladies in their toilet.

The reader may recognize Mrs. Girdwood, daughter, niece, and servant.

It is months since we have met them. They have *done* the European tour—up the Rhine, over the Alps, into Italy. They are returning by way of Paris, into which capital they have but lately entered; and are still engaged in its exploration.

“See Paris last,” was the advice given them by a Parisian gentleman, whose acquaintance they had made, and when Mrs. Girdwood, who smattered a little French, asked, *pourquoi?* she was told that by seeing it first she would care for nothing beyond.

She had taken the Frenchman’s hint, and was now completing the programme.

Though she had met German barons and Italian counts by the score, her girls were still unengaged. Nothing suitable had offered itself in the shape of a title. It remained to be seen what Paris would produce.

The gentlemen “due in half an hour” were old acquaintances; two of them her country-

men : who, making the same tour, had turned up repeatedly on the route, sometimes travelling in her company. They were Messrs. Lucas and Spiller.

She thought nothing of these. But there was a third expected, and looked for with more interest ; one who had only called upon them the day before, and whom they had not seen since the occasion of his having dined with them in their Fifth Avenue house in New York.

It was the lost lord.

On his visit of yesterday everything had been explained ; how he had been detained in the States on diplomatic business ; how he had arrived in London after their departure for the Continent, with apologies for not writing to them—ignorant of their whereabouts.

On Mr. Swinton's part this last was a lie, as well as the first. In the chronicles of the

time he had full knowledge of where they might have been found. He had studiously consulted the American newspaper published in London, which registered the arrivals and departures of transatlantic tourists, and knew to an hour when Mrs. Girdwood and her girls left Cologne, crossed the Alps, stood upon the Bridge of Sighs, or climbed to the burning crater of Vesuvius.

And he had sighed and burned to be along with them, but could not. There was something needed for the accomplishment of his wishes—cash.

It was only when he saw recorded the Girdwood arrival in Paris, that he was at length enabled to scrape together sufficient for the expenses of a passage to, and short sojourn in the French capital, and this only after a propitious adventure in which he had been assisted by the smiles of the goddess Fortune, and the beauty of his beloved Fan.

Fan had been left behind in the London lodging. And by her own consent. She was satisfied to stay, even with the slender stipend her husband could afford to leave for her maintenance. In London the pretty horse-breaker would be at home.

“You have only half an hour, my dears!” counselled Mrs. Girdwood, to stimulate the girls towards getting ready.

Cornelia, who occupied the *fauteuil*, rose to her feet, laying aside the crochet on which she had been engaged; and going off to be dressed by Keziah.

Julia, on the sofa, simply yawned.

Only at a third admonition from her mother, she flung the French novel she had been reading upon the floor, and sat up.

“Bother the gentlemen!” she exclaimed, repeating the yawn with arms upraised. “I wish, ma, you hadn’t asked them to come. I’d rather have stayed in all day, and finished

that beautiful story I've got into. Heaven bless that dear George Sand! Woman that she is, she should have been a man. She knows them as if she were one: their pretensions and treachery. Oh, mother! when you were determined on having a child, why did you make it a daughter? I'd give the world to have been your son!"

"Fie, fie, Jule! Don't let any one hear you talk in that silly way!"

"I don't care whether they do or not. I don't care if all Paris, all France, all the world knows it. I want to be a man, and to have a man's power."

"Pff, child! A man's power! There's no such thing in existence, only in outward show. It has never been exerted, without a woman's will at the back of it. That is the source of all power."

The storekeeper's relict was reasoning from experience. She knew whose will had made

her the mistress of a house in the Fifth Avenue; and given her scores, hundreds, of other advantages, she had never credited to the sagacity of her husband.

“To be a woman,” she continued, “one who knows man and how to manage him, that is enough for me. Ah! Jule, if I’d only had your opportunities, I might this day have been anything.”

“Opportunities! What are they?”

“Your beauty for one.”

“Oh, ma; you had that. You still show it.”

To Mrs. Girdwood the reply was not unpleasant. She had not lost conceit in that personal appearance that had subdued the heart of the rich retailer; and but for a disinheriting clause in his will, might have thought of submitting her charms to a second market. But although this restrained her from speculating on matrimony, she was still good for flattery and flirtation.

“Well,” she said, “if I had good looks, what mattered they without money? You have both, my child.”

“And both don’t appear to help me to a husband—such as you want me to have, mamma?”

“It will be your own fault if they don’t. His lordship would never have renewed his acquaintance with us if he didn’t mean something. From what he hinted to me yesterday, I’m sure he has come to Paris on our account. He almost said as much. It is you, Julia, it is you.”

Julia came very near expressing a wish that his lordship was at the bottom of the sea; but knowing how it would annoy her mother, she kept the sentiment to herself. She had just time to get enrobed for the street, as the gentleman was announced. He was still plain Mr. Swinton, still travelling incognito, on “seqwet diplomatic business for the Bwedish

Government." So had he stated in confidence to Mrs. Girdwood.

Shortly after, Messrs. Lucas and Spiller made their appearance, and the party was complete.

It was only to be a promenade on the boulevards, to end in a little dinner in the Café Riche, Royale, or the Maison Doré.

And with this simple programme the six sallied forth from the Hotel de Louvre.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE BOULEVARDS.

ON the afternoon of that same Second of December, a man, sauntering along the Boulevards, said to himself:

“There’s trouble hanging over this gay city of Paris. I can smell mischief in its atmosphere.”

The man who made this remark was Captain Maynard. He was walking out alone, having arrived in Paris only the day before.

His presence in the French metropolis may be explained by stating, that he had read in an English newspaper a paragraph announcing

the arrival of Sir George Vernon at Paris. The paragraph further said, that Sir George had returned thither after visiting the various courts of Europe on some secret and confidential mission to the different British ambassadors.

Something of this Maynard knew already. He had not slighted the invitation given him by the English baronet on the landing-wharf at Liverpool. Returning from his Hungarian expedition, he had gone down to Sevenoaks, Kent. Too late, and again to suffer disappointment. Sir George had just started for a tour of travel on the Continent, taking his daughter along with him. He might be gone for a year, or maybe more. This was all his steward could or *would* tell.

Not much more of the missing baronet could Maynard learn in London. Only the *on dit* in political circles that he had been entrusted with some sort of secret circular

mission to the European courts, or those of them known as the Great Powers.

Its secrecy must have been deemed important for Sir George to travel *incognito*. And so must he have travelled ; else Maynard, diligently consulting the chronicles of the times, should have discovered his whereabouts.

This he had daily done, making inquiries elsewhere, and without success ; until, months after, his eye fell upon the paragraph in question.

Had he still faith in that presentiment, several times so confidently expressed ?

If so, it did not hinder him from passing over to Paris, and taking steps to help in the desired destiny.

Certain it was still desired. The anxiety he had shown to get upon the track of Sir George's travel, the haste made on discovering it, and the diligence he was now showing to find the English baronet's address in the

French capital, were proofs that he was not altogether a fatalist.

During the twenty-four hours since his arrival in Paris he had made inquiries at every hotel where such a guest was likely to make stay. But no Sir George Vernon—no English baronet could be found.

He had at length determined to try at the English embassy. But that was left for the next day; and, like all strangers, he went out to take a stroll along the Boulevards.

He had reached that of Montmartre as the thought, chronicled above, occurred to him.

It could scarce have been suggested by anything he there saw. Passing and meeting him were the Parisian people—citizens of a free republic, with a president of their own choice. The bluff *bourgeois*, with *sa femme* linked on his left arm, and *sa fille*, perhaps a pretty child, hand-led, on his right. Behind him it might be a brace of gaily-dressed

grisettes, close followed by a couple of the young *dorés*, exchanging stealthy glance or bold repartee.

Here and there a party of students, released from the studies of the day, a group of promenaders of both sexes, ladies and gentlemen, who had sallied out to enjoy the fine weather and the walk upon the broad smooth *banquette* of the Boulevard, all chatting in tranquil strain, unsuspecting of danger, as if they had been sauntering along a rural road, or the strand of some quiet watering-place.

A sky over them serene as that which may have canopied the garden of Eden: an atmosphere around so mild that the doors of the cafés had been thrown open, and inside could be seen the true Parisian *flaneur*—artists or authors—seated by the marble-topped table, sipping his *eau sucré*, slipping the spare sugar lumps into his pocket for home use in his six francs-a-week garret, and

dividing his admiration between the patent-leather shoes on his feet and the silken-dressed damsels who passed and repassed along the flagged pavement in front.

It was not from observation of these Parisian peculiarities that Maynard had been led to make the remark we have recorded, but from a scene to which he had been witness on the preceding night.

Straying through the Palais Royal, then called "National," he had entered the Café de Mil Colonnes, the noted resort of the Algerine officers. With the recklessness of one who seeks adventure for its own sake, and who has been accustomed to having it without stint, he soon found himself amidst men unaccustomed to introductions. Paying freely for their drinks—to which, truth compels me to say, as far as in their purses they corresponded—he was soon clinking cups with them, and listening to their sentiments. He

could not help remarking the recurrence of that toast that has since brought humiliation to France :

“ *Vive l'Empereur !* ”

At least a dozen times was it drank during the evening—each time with an enthusiasm that sounded ominous in the ears of the republican soldier. There was a unanimity too that rendered it the more impressive. He knew that the French President was aiming at Empire ; but up to that hour he could not believe in the possibility of his achieving it.

As he drank with the Chasseurs d'Afrique in the Café de Mil Colonnes, he saw it was not only possible but proximate ; and that ere long Louis Napoleon would either wrap his shoulders in the Imperial purple or in a shroud.

The thought stung him to the quick. Even in that company he could not conceal his chagrin. He gave expression to it in a phrase, half in soliloquy, half meant for the ear of a

man who appeared the most moderate among the enthusiasts around him.

“*Pauvre France !*” was the reflection.

“*Pauvre France !*” cried a fierce-looking but diminutive sous-lieutenant of Zouaves, catching up the phrase, and turning toward the man who had given utterance to it.

“*Pauvre France ! Pourquoi, monsieur ?*”

“I pity France,” said Maynard, “if you intend making an Empire of it.”

“What’s that to you?” angrily rejoined the Zouave lieutenant, whose beard and moustache, meeting over his mouth, gave a hissing utterance to his speech. “What does it concern you, monsieur?”

“Not so fast, Virocq !” interposed the officer to whom Maynard had more particularly addressed himself. “This gentleman is a soldier like ourselves. But he is an American, and of course believes in the Republic. We have all our political inclinings. That’s no

reason why we should not be friends socially—as we are here!”

Virocq, after making a survey of Maynard, who did not quail before his scrutiny, seemed contented with the explanation. At all events he satisfied his wounded patriotism by once more turning to the clique of his comrades, tossing his glass on high, and once more vociferating “*Vive l'Empereur !*”

It was the remembrance of this scene of last night that led Maynard to reflect, when passing along the Boulevard, there was mischief in the atmosphere of Paris.

He became more convinced of it as he walked on toward the Boulevard de Bastille. There the stream of promenaders showed groups of a different aspect : for he had gone beyond the point where the genteel bourgeoisie takes its turn ; where patent leather boots and *eau sucré* give place to a coarser *chassure* and stronger beverage. Blouses were inter-

mingled with the throng; while the *casernes* on both sides of the street were filled with soldiers, drinking without stint, and what seemed stranger still, with their officers along with them!

With all his republican experience—even in the campaign of Mexico—even under the exigencies of the relaxed discipline brought about by the proximity of death upon the battle-field, the revolutionary leader could not help astonishment at this. He was still more surprised to see the French people—along the street—even the blouses submitting to repeated insults put upon them by those things in uniform—the former stout stalwart fellows—the latter, most of them, diminutive ruffians—despite their big breeches and swaggering gait, looking more like monkeys than men!

From such a scene, back toward Montmartre he turned with disgust.

While retracing his steps, he reflected:

“If the French people allow themselves to be bullied by such *bavards* as these, it’s no business of mine. They don’t deserve to be free.”

He was on the Boulevard des Italiens as he made this reflection, heading on for the widening way of the Rue de la Paix. He had already noticed a change in the aspect of the promenaders.

Troops were passing along the pavement; and taking station at the corners of the streets. Detachments occupied the *casernes* and *cafés*, not in serious, soldier-like sobriety, but calling imperiously for refreshments, and drinking without thought or pretence of payment. The bar-keeper refusing them was threatened with a blow, or the thrust of a sabre!

The promenaders on the pave were rudely accosted. Some of them pushed aside by half-intoxicated squads, that passed them on the double-quick, as if bent on some exigent duty.

Seeing this, some parties had taken to the

side streets to regain their houses. Others supposing it only a soldierly freak—the return from a Presidential review—were disposed to take it in good part; and thinking the thing would soon be over, still stayed upon the Boulevard.

Maynard was among those who remained.

Interrupted by the passing of a company of Zouaves, he had taken stand upon the steps of a house, near the *embouchure* of the Rue de Vivienne. With a soldier's eye he was scrutinizing these military vagabonds, supposed to be of Arab race, but whom he knew to be the scourgings of the Parisian streets, disguised under the turbans of Mohammed. He did not think in after years such types of military would be imitated in the land he had left behind, with such pride in its chivalry.

He saw that they were already half intoxicated, staggering after their leader in careless file, little regarding the commands called

back to them. Out of the ranks they were dropping off, in twos and threes, entering the *cafés*, or accosting whatever citizen chanced to challenge their attention.

In the doorway where Maynard had drawn up, a young girl had also taken refuge. She was a pretty creature and somewhat elegantly dressed; withal of modest appearance. She may have been “*grisette*,” or “*cocotte*.” It mattered not to Maynard, who had not been regarding her.

But her fair proportions had caught the eye of one of the passing Zouaves; who parting from the ranks of his comrades, rushed up the steps and insisted upon kissing her!

The girl appealed to Maynard, who, without giving an instant to reflection, seized the Zouave by the collar, and with a kick sent him staggering from the steps.

A shout of “*Secours!*” traversed along the line, and the whole troop halted, as if sur-

prised by a sudden assault of Arabs. The officer leading them came running back, and stood confronting the stranger.

“*Sacré!*” he cried. “It’s you, monsieur! you who go against the Empire!”

Maynard recognized the ruffian, who on the night before had disputed with him in the Café de Mil Colonnes.

“*Bon!*” cried Virocq, before Maynard could make either protest or reply. “Lay hold upon him, comrades! Take him back to the guard-house in the Champs Elysées. You’ll repent your interference, monsieur, in a country that calls for the Empire and order. *Vive l’Empereur!*”

Half a dozen crimson-breeched ruffians springing from the ranks threw themselves around Maynard, and commenced dragging him along the Boulevard.

It required this number to conquer and carry him away.

At the corner of the Rue de la Paix a strange tableau was presented to his eyes. Three ladies, accompanied by three gentlemen, were spectators of his humiliation. Promenading upon the pavement, they had drawn up on one side to give passage to the soldiers who had him in charge.

Notwithstanding the haste in which he was carried past them, he saw who they were: Mrs. Girdwood and her girls—Richard Swinton; Louis Lucas and his acolyte, attending upon them!

There was no time to think of them, or why they were there. Dragged along by the Zouaves, occasionally cursed and cuffed by them, absorbed in his own wild rage, Maynard only occupied himself with thoughts of vengeance. It was to him an hour of agony—the agony of an impotent anger!

CHAPTER VIII.

A NATION'S MURDER.

"MA Gawd!" exclaimed Swinton. "It's that fellow, Maynard! You remember him, ladies? The fellow who, at Newpawt, wan away after gwoosely insulting me, without giving me the oppawtunity of obtaining the satisfaction of a gentleman?"

"Come, come, Mr. Swinton!" said Lucas, interposing. "I don't wish to contradict you; but you'll excuse me for saying that he didn't exactly run away. I think I ought to know."

The animus of Lucas's speech is easily explained. He had grown rather hostile to Swinton. And no wonder. After pursuing

the Fifth Avenue heiress all through the Continental tour, and as he supposed with fair prospect of success, he was once more in danger of being outdone by his English rival, freshly returned to the field.

“My deaw Mr. Lucas,” responded Swinton, “that’s all vewy twue. The fellow, as you say, wote me a lettaw, which did not weach me in pwoper time. But that was no weason why he should have stolen away and left no adwess faw me to find him.”

“He didn’t steal away,” quietly rejoined Lucas.

“Well,” said Swinton, “I won’t argue the question. Not with you, my deaw fwend, at all events——”

“What can it mean?” interposed Mrs. Girdwood, noticing the ill feeling between the suitors of Julia, and with the design of turning it off. “Why have they arrested him? Can any one tell?”

“ Pawhaps he has committed some kwime ?” suggested Swinton.

“ That’s not likely, sir,” sharply asserted Cornelia.

“ Aw—aw. Well, Miss Inskip, I may be wong in calling it kwime. It’s a question of fwaseology ; but I’ve been told that this Mr. Maynard is one of those wed wepublicans who would destwoy society, weligion, in shawt, ewevything. No doubt, he has been meddling heaw in Fwance, and that’s the cause of his being a pwisoner. At least I suppose so.”

Julia had as yet said nothing. She was gazing after the arrested man, who had ceased struggling against his captors, and was being hurried off out of sight.

In the mind of the proud girl there was a thought, Maynard might have felt proud of inspiring. In that moment of his humiliation he knew not that the most beautiful woman on the Boulevard had him in her heart with

a deep interest, and a sympathy for his misfortune—whatever it might be.

“Can nothing be done, mamma?”

“For what, Julia?”

“For him!” and she pointed after Maynard.

“Certainly not, my child. Not by us. It is no affair of ours. He has got himself into some trouble with the soldiers. Perhaps, as Mr. Swinton says, political. Let him get out of it as he can. I suppose he has his friends. Whether or not, we can do nothing for him. Not even if we tried. How could we—strangers like us?”

“Our Minister, mamma. You remember Captain Maynard has fought under the American flag. He would be entitled to its protection. Shall we go to the Embassy?”

“We’ll do nothing of the kind, silly girl. I tell you it’s no affair of ours. We shan’t make or meddle with it. Come! let us return

to the hotel. These soldiers seem to be behaving strangely. We'd better get out of their way. Look yonder! There are fresh troops of them pouring into the streets, and talking angrily to the people!"

It was as Mrs. Girdwood had said. From the side streets armed bands were issuing, one after the other; while along the open boulevard came rolling artillery carriages, followed by their caissons, the horses urged to furious speed by drivers who appeared drunk!

Here and there one dropped off, throwing itself into battery and unlimbering as if for action. Before, or alongside them, galloped squadrons of cavalry, lancers, cuirassiers, and conspicuously the Chasseurs d'Afrique—fit tools selected for the task that was before them.

All wore an air of angry excitement as men under the influence of spirits taken to prepare them for some sanguinary purpose. It was

proclaimed by a string of watchwords passing occasionally between them, "*Vive l'Empereur ! Vive l'armée ! A bas ces canailles de députés et philosophes !*"

Each moment the turmoil increased, the crowd also augmenting from streams pouring in by the side streets. Citizens became mingled with the soldiery, and here and there could be heard angry shouts and speeches of remonstrance.

All at once, and as if by a preconcerted signal, came the crisis.

It *was* preconcerted, and by a signal only entrusted to the leaders.

A shot fired in the direction of the Madeleine from a gun of largest calibre, boomed along the Boulevards, and went reverberating over all Paris. It was distinctly heard in the distant Bastille, where the sham barricades had been thrown up, and the sham-barricaders were listening for it. It was quickly followed

by another, heard in like manner. Answering to it rose the shout, "*Vive la République—Rouge et Démocratique !*"

But it was not heard for long. Almost instantaneously was it drowned by the roar of cannon, and the rattling of musketry, mingled with the imprecations of ruffians in uniform rushing along the street.

The fusillade commencing at the Bastille did not long stay there. It was not intended that it should; nor was it to be confined to the *sans culottes* and *ouvriers*. Like a stream of fire—the ignited train of a mine—it swept along the Boulevards, blazing and crackling as it went, striking down before it man and woman, blouse and bourgeoisie, student and shopkeeper, in short all who had gone forth for a promenade on that awful afternoon. The sober husband with wife on one arm and child on the other, the gay grisette with her student protector, the unsuspecting stranger,

lady or gentleman, were alike prostrated under that leaden shower of death. People rushed screaming towards the doorways, or attempted to escape through side streets. But here, too, they were met by men in uniform. Chasseurs and Zouaves, who with foaming lips and cheeks black from the biting of cartridges, drove them back before sabre and bayonet, impaling them by scores, amidst hoarse shouts and fiendish cachinnation, as of maniacs let forth to indulge in a wild saturnalia of death!

And it continued till the pave was heaped with dead bodies, and the gutters ran blood; till there was nothing more to kill, and cruelty stayed its stroke for want of a victim!

A dread episode was that massacre of the Second of December, striking terror to the heart, not only of Paris, but France.

In fear and trembling it holds it to this hour!

CHAPTER IX.

“ I’LL COME TO YOU !”

IN the balconied window of a handsome house fronting on the Tuileries Gardens were two female figures, neither of which had anything to pronounce them Parisian. One was a young girl with an English face, bright roseate complexion, and sunny hair; the other was a tawny-skinned mulatta.

The reader will recognize Blanche Vernon and her attendant, Sabina.

It was not strange that Maynard could not find Sir George at any of the hotels. The English baronet was quartered as above,

having preferred the privacy of a *maison meublée*.

Sir George was not at home; and his daughter, with Sabina by her side, had stepped out upon the balcony to observe the ever-changing panorama upon the street below.

The call of a cavalry bugle, with the braying of a military band, had made them aware that soldiers were passing—a sight attractive to women, whether young or old, dark or fair.

On looking over the parapet, they saw that the street was filled with them: soldiers of all arms—infantry, cavalry, artillery—some halted, some marching past; while officers in brilliant uniforms, mounted on fine horses, were galloping to and fro, vociferating orders to the various squadrons they commanded.

For some time the young English girl and her attendant looked down upon the glittering array, without exchanging speech.

It was Sabina who at length broke silence.

“Dey ain’t nowha ’longside ow British officas, for all dat gildin’ an’ red trowsas. Dey minds me ob a monkey I once see in ’Badoes dress’ up soja fashion—jes’ like dat monkey some o’ ’em look !”

“Come, Sabby ! you are severe in your criticism. These French officers have the name of being very brave and gallant.”

The daughter of Sir George Vernon was a year older than when last seen by us. She had travelled a great deal of late. Though still but a child, it was not strange she should talk with the sageness of a woman.

“Doan b’lieve it,” was the curt answer of the attendant. “Dar only brave when dey drink wine, an’ gallant when de womans am good-looking. Dat’s what dese French be. Affer all dey’s only ’publicans, jess de same as in dem ’Meriky States.”

The remark seemed to produce a sudden change in the attitude of the young girl. A

remembrance came over her; and instead of continuing to gaze at the soldiers below, she stood abstracted and thoughtful.

Sabina noticed her abstraction, and had some suspicion of what was causing it. Though her young mistress had long since ceased to be a communicative child, the shrewd attendant could guess what was passing through her thoughts.

The words "Republic" and "America," though spoken in Badian patois, had recalled incidents, by Blanche never to be forgotten.

Despite her late reticence on the subject of these past scenes, Sabina knew that she still fondly remembered them. Her silence but showed it the more.

"'Deed yes, Missy Blanche," continued the mulatta, "dem fellas down dar hab no respect for politeness. Jess see de way dey's swaggerin'! Look how dey push dem poor people 'bout!"

She referred to an incident transpiring on the street below. A small troop of Zouaves, marching rapidly along the sidewalk, had closed suddenly upon a crowd of civilian spectators. Instead of giving fair time for the latter to make way, the officer at the head of the troop not only vented vociferations upon them, but threatened them with drawn sword; while the red-breeched ruffians at his back seemed equally ready to make use of their bayonets!

Some of the people treated it as a joke, and laughed loudly; others gave back angry words or jeers; while the majority appeared awed and trembling.

“Dem’s de sogas ob de ’public—de officas, too!” exultingly pursued the loyal Badian. “You nebba see officas ob de Queen of England do dat way. Nebba!”

“No, nor all republican officers, Sabby. I know one who would not, and so do you.”

"Ah! Missy Blanche; me guess who you peakin' of. Dat young genlum save you from de 'tagin' ob de steama. Berry true. He was brave, gallant offica—Sabby say dat."

"But he was a republican!"

"Well, maybe he wa. Dey said so. But he wan't none ob de 'Meriky 'publicans, nor ob dese French neida. Me hear you fadda say he b'long to de country ob England."

"To Ireland."

"Shoo, Missy Blanche, dat all de same! Tho' he no like dem Irish we see out in de Wes' Indy. Dar's plenty ob dem in 'Badoes."

"You're speaking of the Irish labourers, whom you've seen doing the hard work. Captain Maynard—that's his name, Sabby—is a gentleman. Of course that makes the difference."

"Ob course. A berry great diff'rence. He no like dem no how. But, Missy Blanche, wonda wha he now am! Trange we no mo'

hear ob him! You tink he gone back to de 'Meriky States?"

The question touched a chord in the bosom of the young girl that thrilled unpleasantly. It was the same that for more than twelve months she had been putting to herself, in daily repetitions. She could no more answer it than the mulatta.

"I'm sure I cannot tell, Sabby."

She said this with an air of calmness which her quick-witted attendant knew to be unreal.

"Berry trange he no come to meet you fadda in de big house at Seven Oak. Me see de gubnor gib um de 'dress on one ob dem card. Me hear you fadder say he muss come, and hear de young genlum make promise. Wonda wha for he no keep it?"

Blanche wondered too, though without declaring it. Many an hour had she spent conjecturing the cause of his failing to keep

that promise. She would have been glad to see him again; to thank him once more, and in less hurried fashion, for that act of gallantry, which, it might be, was the saving of her life.

She had been told then that he intended to take part in some of the revolutions. But she knew that all these were over; and he could not be now engaged in them. He must have stayed in England or Ireland? Or had he returned to the United States? In any case, why had he not come down to Seven-oaks, Kent? It was but an hour’s ride from London!

Perhaps in the midst of his exalted associations—military and political—he had forgotten the simple child he had plucked from peril? It might be but one of the ordinary incidents of his adventurous life, and was scarce retained in his memory?

But she remembered it; with a deep sense

of indebtedness—a romantic gratitude, that grew stronger as she became more capable of appreciating the disinterestedness of the act.

Perhaps all the more, that the benefactor had not returned to claim his reward. She was old enough to know her father's position and power. A mere adventurer would have availed himself of such a chance to benefit by them. Captain Maynard could not be this?

It made her happy to reflect that he was a gentleman; but sad to think, she should never see him again.

Often had these alternations of thought passed through the mind of this fair young creature. They were passing through it that moment, as she stood looking out upon the Tuileries, regardless of the stirring incidents that were passing upon the pavement below.

Her thoughts were of the past ; of a scene on the other side of the Atlantic ; of many a little episode on board the Cunard steamer ; of one yet more vividly remembered, when she was hanging by a rope above angry hungering waves, till she felt a strong arm thrown around her, that lifted her beyond their rage !

She was startled from her reverie by the voice of her attendant, uttered in a tone of unusual excitement.

“ Look ! lookee yonder, Missy Blanche ! Dem Arab fellas hab take a man prisoner ! See ! dey fotch im this way—right under de winda. Poor fella ! Wonda what he been an done ? ”

Blanche Vernon bent over the balcony, and scanned the street below. Her eye soon rested on the group pointed out by Sabina.

Half a dozen Zouaves, hurrying along with loud talk and excited gesticulation, conducted a man in their midst. He was in civilian

dress, of a style that bespoke the gentleman, notwithstanding its disorder.

“Some political offender!” thought the daughter of the diplomatist, not wholly unacquainted with the proceedings of the times.

It was a conjecture that passed, quick as it had come ; but only into a certainty. Despite the disordered dress and humiliating position of the man—the young girl recognized her rescuer—he who, but the moment before, was occupying her thoughts!

And he saw her! Walking with head erect, and eyes upturned to the heaven he feared not to face, his glance fell upon a dark-skinned woman with a white toque on her head, and beside her a young girl shining like a Virgin of the Sun!

He had no time to salute them. No chance either, for his hands were in manacles!

In another instant he was beneath the

balcony, forced forward by the chattering apes who were guarding him.

But he heard a voice above his head—above their curses and their clamour—a soft, sweet voice, crying out :

“I’ll come to you! I will come!”

CHAPTER X.

TO THE PRISON.

“I’LL come to you! I will come!”

True to the intention thus proclaimed, Blanche Vernon glided back into the room; and, hastily laying hold of hat and cloak, was making for the stair.

“You mad, missa!” cried the mulatta, throwing herself into the doorway with the design of intercepting her. “What will you fadda say? Dar’s danger outside ’mong dem noisy sojas. For lub ob de good Jesus, Missy Blanche, doan tink ob goin’ down to de ’treet!”

“There’s no danger. I don’t care if there

is. Stand out of the way, Sabby, or I'll be too late. Stand aside, I tell you!"

"O, Mass Freeman!" appealed Sabina to the footman, who had come out of his ante-chamber on hearing the excited dialogue, "you see what you young misress agoin' to do?"

"What be it, Miss Blanche?"

"Nothing, Freeman; nothing for Sabby to make so much of. I'm only going to find papa. Don't either of you hinder me!"

The command was spoken in that tone which the servants of England's aristocracy are habituated to respect; and Blanche Vernon, though still only a child, was accustomed to their obedience.

Before Freeman could make reply, she had passed out of the room, and commenced descending the *escalier*.

Sabina rushed after, no longer with the design of intercepting, but to accompany her.

Sabby needed no bonnet. Her white toque was her constant coiffure, out-doors as in.

Freeman, laying hold of his hat, followed them down the stair.

On reaching the street, the young girl did not pause for an instant ; but turned along the footway in the direction in which the prisoner had been conducted.

Soldiers were still passing in troops, and citizens hurrying excitedly by, some going one way, some another. Dragoons were galloping along the wide causeway; and through the Tuileries Gardens; while the court inside the iron railing was alive with uniformed men.

Loud shouting was heard near at hand, with the rolling of drums and the sharp calling of trumpets.

Further off, in the direction of the Boulevards, there was a constant rattling, which she knew to be the fire of musketry, mingled with the louder booming of cannon !

She had no knowledge of what it could all mean. There were always soldiers in the streets of Paris and around the Tuileries. The marching of troops with beating drums, screaming bugles, and firing of guns, were things of every day occurrence; for almost every day there were reviews and military exercises.

This only differed from the rest in the more excited appearance of the soldiery, their ruder behaviour toward the pedestrians who chanced in their way, and the terrified appearance of the latter, as they rushed quickly out of it. Several were seen hastening, as if for concealment or refuge! The young girl noticed this, but paid no regard to it. She only hurried on, Sabina by her side, Freeman close following.

Her eyes were directed along the sidewalk, as if searching for some one who should appear at a distance before her. She was

scanning the motley crowd to make out the Zouave dresses.

An exclamation at length told that she had discovered them. A group in Oriental garb could be distinguished about a hundred yards ahead of her. In their midst was a man in civilian costume, plainly their prisoner. It was he who had tempted her forth on that perilous promenade.

Whilst her eyes were still on them, they turned suddenly from the street, conducting their captive through a gateway that was guarded by sentinels and surrounded by a crowd of soldiers—Zouaves like themselves.

“Monsieur!” said she, on arriving in front of the entrance, and addressing herself to one of the soldiers, “why has that gentleman been taken prisoner?”

As she spoke in his own tongue, the soldier had no difficulty in understanding her.

“Ho—ho!” he said, making her a mock salute, and bending down till his hairy face almost touched her soft rose-coloured cheek, “My pretty white dove with the *chevelure d’or*, what gentleman are you inquiring about?”

“He who has just been taken in there.”

She pointed to the gateway now closed.

“*Parbleu!* my little love! that’s no description. A score have been taken in there within the last half hour—all gentlemen, I have no doubt. At least there were no ladies among them.”

“I mean the one who went in last. There have been none since.”

“The last—the last—let me see! Oh! I suppose he’s been shut up for the same reason as the others.”

“What is it, monsieur?”

“*Par dieu!* I can’t tell, my pretty sunbeam! Why are you so interested in him? You are not his sister, are you? No; I see you’re

not," continued the soldier, glancing at Sabina and Freeman, becoming also more respectful at the sight of the liveried attendant. "You must be une Anglaise?"

"Yes, I am," was the reply.

"If you'll stay here a moment," said the Zouave, "I'll step inside and inquire for you."

"Pray, do, monsieur!"

Drawing a little to one side, with Sabina and Freeman to protect her from being jostled, Blanche waited for the man's return.

True to his promise he came back; but without bringing the required information.

He could only tell them that, "the young man had been made prisoner for some political offence—for having interfered with the soldiers when upon their duty."

"Perhaps," added he, in a whisper, "monsieur has been incautious. He may have called out, '*Vive la République!*' when the parole for to-day is '*Vive l'Empereur!*' He

appears to be an Anglais. Is he a relative of yours, mam'selle?"

"Oh, no!" answered the young girl, turning hastily away, and without even saying "merci" to the man who had taken such trouble to serve her.

"Come, Sabina! let us go back to the house. And you, Freeman, run to the English Embassy! If you don't find papa there, go in search of him. All over Paris if need be. Tell him he is wanted—that I want him. Bring him along with you. Dear Freeman! promise me you will not lose a moment's time. It's the same gentleman who saved my life at Liverpool! You remember it. If harm should come to him here in this horrid city—go quick, sir! Take this! You may need a coach. Tell papa—tell Lord C—you know what to say. Quick! quick!"

The handful of five-franc pieces poured into his palm would of itself have been sufficient

to stimulate the footman; and, without protest, he started off in the direction of the English Embassy.

His young mistress, with her attendant, returned to the *maison meublée* — there to await the coming of her father.

CHAPTER XI.

TO THE EMBASSY.

“CORNEEL! are you the woman to go with me?”

The question was from Julia Girdwood to her cousin, after their return to the Hotel de Louvre. They were alone in their *chambre de coucher*, still shawled and bonneted, as they had come in from their promenade.

Mrs. Girdwood, yet engaged with the trio of gentlemen, was in a reception-room below.

“Where?” asked Cornelia.

“Where! I’m astonished you should ask! Of course after *him*!”

“Dear Jule! I know what you mean. I

was thinking of it myself. But what will aunt say, if we so expose ourselves? There's danger in the streets. I believe they were firing upon the people—I'm sure they were! You hear the shooting now? Isn't that the roaring of cannon? It sounds like it!"

"Don't be a coward, cousin! You remember a roaring loud as that against the rocky cliffs of Newport! Did he hold back when we were in danger of our lives? Perhaps we may save his!"

"Julia! I did not think of holding back. I'm ready to go with you, if we can do anything for him. What do you propose?"

"First, find out to where they have taken him. I'll know that soon. You saw me speak to a *commissaire*?"

"I did. You put something into his hand?"

"A five-franc piece for him to follow the Zouaves, and see where they took their pri-

soner. I promised him twice as much to come back and make report. I warrant he'll soon be here."

"And what then, Julia? What can we do?"

"Of ourselves, nothing. I don't know any more than yourself why Captain Maynard has got into trouble with these Parisian soldiers. No doubt it's on account of his republican belief. We've heard about that; and God bless the man for so believing!"

"Dear Julia! you know how I agree with you in the sentiment!"

"Well—no matter what he's done. It's our duty to do what we can for him."

"I know it is, cousin. I only ask you what can we do?"

"We shall see. We have a Minister here. Not the man he should be: for it's the misfortune of America to send to European Governments the very men who are *not* true

representatives of our nation. The very opposite are chosen. The third-rate intellects, with a pretended social polish, supposed to make them acceptable at kingly courts—as if the great Republic of America required to be propped up with pretension and diplomacy. Corneel! we're losing time. The man, to whom we perhaps both owe our lives, may be at this moment in danger of losing his! Who knows where they've taken him? It is our duty to go and see."

"Will you tell aunt?"

"No. She'd be sure to object to our going out. Perhaps take steps to hinder us. Let us steal down-stairs, and get off without telling her. We needn't be long absent. She'll not know anything about it till we're back again."

"But where do you propose going, Julia?"

"First, down to the front of the hotel. There we shall await the coming of the *com-*

missaire. I told him the Hotel de Louvre; and I wish to meet him outside. He may be there now. Come on, Corneel !”

Still in their promenade dresses, there was no need of delay ; and the two ladies, gliding down the stone stairway of the Louvre Hotel, stood in the entrance below. They had no waiting to do. The *commissaire* met them on the steps, and communicated the result of his errand.

His account was simple. Accustomed only to speculate upon what he was paid for, he had observed only to the limits of the stipulation. The Zouaves had carried their prisoner to a guard-room fronting the Tuileries Gardens, and there shut him up. So the commissary supposed.

He had made memorandum of the number, and handed it over to the lady who commissioned him, receiving in return a golden coin, for which no change was required.

"That will do," muttered Julia to her cousin, as they sallied forth upon the street, and took their way toward the unpretentious building that over the door showed the lettering, "U. S. LEGATION."

"There, as everywhere else, they found excitement—even terror. They had to pass through a crowd mostly composed of their own countrymen.

But these, proverbially gallant towards women, readily gave way to them. Who would not to women such as they?

A Secretary came forth to receive them. He regretted that the Minister was engaged.

But the proud Julia Girdwood would take no denial. It was a matter of moment—perhaps of life and death. She must see the representative of her country, and on the instant!

There is no influence stronger than woman's beauty. Perhaps none so strong.

The Secretary of Legation succumbed to it; and, disregarding the orders he had received, opened a side door, and admitted the intercessors to an interview with the Ambassador.

Their story was soon told. A man who had borne the banner of the Stars and Stripes through the hailstorm of more than one battle—who had carried it up the steep of Chapultepec—till it fell from his arm paralysed by the enemy's shot—that man was now in Paris—prisoner to drunken Zouave soldiers—in peril of his life!

Such was the appeal made to the American Minister

It needed not such beautiful appellants. Above the conservatism of the man—after all only social—rose the purer pride of his country's honour.

Yielding to its dictates, he sallied forth, determined upon doing his duty.

CHAPTER XII.

DEATH UPON THE DRUM-HEAD.

“I’LL come to you ! I will come !”

Proud was the heart of the prisoner, as he heard that cheering speech, and saw whence it had come. It repaid him for the insults he was enduring.

It was still ringing sweetly in his ears, as he was forced through a doorway, and on into a paved court enclosed by gloomy walls.

At the bottom of this, an apartment resembling a prison-cell, opened to receive him.

He was thrust into it, like a refractory bullock brought back to its pen, one of his guards giving him a kick as he stepped over the threshold.

He had no chance to retaliate the brutality. The door closed upon him with a clash and a curse—followed by the shooting of a bolt outside.

Inside the cell all was darkness; and for a moment he remained standing where the propulsion had left him.

But he was not silent. His heart was full of indignation; and his lips mechanically gave utterance to it in a wild anathema against all forms and shapes of despotism.

More than ever did his heart thrill for the Republic: for he knew they were not its soldiers who surrounded him.

It was the first time he had experienced in his own person the bitterness of that irresponsible rule confined to the one-man power;

and better than ever he now comprehended the heart-hatred of Roseveldt for priests, princes, and kings!

"It's plain the Republic's at an end here!" he muttered to himself, after venting that anathema upon its enemies.

"*C'est vrai, monsieur,*" said a voice, speaking from the interior of the cell. "*C'est fini!* It ends this day!"

Maynard started. He had believed himself alone.

"You French speak?" continued the voice. "*Vous êtes Anglais?*"

"To your first question," answered Maynard, "Yes! To your second, No! *Je suis Irlandais!*"

"*Irlandais!* For what have they brought you here? *Pardonnez-moi, monsieur!* I take the liberties of a fellow-prisoner."

Maynard frankly gave the explanation.

"Ah! my friend," said the Frenchman, on

hearing it, "you have nothing to fear then. With me it is different."

A sigh could be heard closing the speech.

"What do you mean, monsieur?" mechanically inquired Maynard. "*You* have not committed a crime?"

"Yes! A great crime—that of patriotism! I have been true to my country, to freedom. I am one of the compromised. My name is L——"

"L——!" cried the Irish-American, recognizing a name well-known to the friends of freedom. "Is it possible? Is it you? My name is Maynard."

"*Mon Dieu!*" exclaimed his French fellow-prisoner. "I've heard of it! I know you, sir!"

Amidst the darkness the two met in mutual embrace, mutually murmuring those cherished words, "*Vive la république!*"

L—— added, "*Rouge et démocratique!*"

Maynard, though he did not go thus far, said nothing in dissent. It was not time to *split* upon delicate distinctions!

“But what do you mean by speaking of your danger?” asked Maynard. “Surely it has not come to this?”

“Do you hear those sounds?”

The two stood listening.

“Yes. There is shouting outside—shots, too. That is the rattle of musketry. More distant, I hear guns—cannon. One might fancy an engagement!”

“It is!” gravely responded the Red Republican. “An engagement that will end in the annihilation of our freedom. You are listening to its death-knell—mine, too, I make no doubt of it.”

Touched by the serious words of his fellow-captive, Maynard was turning to him for an explanation, when the door was suddenly thrown open, discovering a group outside it.

They were officers in various uniforms — chiefly Zouaves and Chasseurs d'Afrique.

“He is in here,” cried one of them, whom Maynard recognized as the ruffian Virocq.

“Bring him out, then!” commanded one with the strap of a colonel upon his shoulders. “Let his trial proceed at once!”

Maynard supposed it to be himself. He was mistaken. It was the man more noted than he—more dangerous to the aspirations of the Empire. It was L——.

A large drum stood in the open courtyard, with half a dozen chairs around it. On its head was an inkstand, pens and paper. They were the symbols of a court-martial.

They were only used as shams. The paper was not stained with the record of that foul proceeding. The pen was not even dipped in the ink. President and members, judge, advocate, and recorder, were all half intoxicated.

All demanded blood, and had determined on shedding it.

Of the trial, informal as it was, Maynard was not a spectator. The door had been re-closed upon him; and he stood listening behind it.

Not for long. Before ten minutes had elapsed, there came through the keyhole a simple word that told him his fellow-prisoner was condemned. It was the word "*Coupable!*"

It was quick followed by a fearful phrase: "*Tirez au moment!*"

There were some words of remonstrance which Maynard could hear spoken by his late fellow-prisoner; among them the phrase, "*C'est un assassinat!*"

They were followed by a shuffling sound—the tread as of a troop hurrying into line.

There was an interval of silence, like a lull in the resting storm.

It was short—only for a few seconds.

It was broken by a shout that filled the whole court, though proceeding only from a single voice! It was that shout that had more than once driven a king from his throne; but was now to be the pretext for establishing an Empire!

“*Vive la république, rouge!*” were the last words of the heroic L——, as he bared his breast to the bullets of his assassins!

“*Tirez!*” cried a voice, which Maynard recognized as that of the sous-lieutenant Virocq; its echo around the walls overtaken and drowned by the deadly rattle it had invoked!

It was a strange time for exultation over such a dastardly deed. But that courtyard was filled with strange men. More like fiends were they as they waved their shakoes in air, answering the defiance of the fallen man with a cry that betokened the fall of France!

“*Vive l'Empereur!*”

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TWO FLAGS.

LISTENING inside his cell, hearing little of what was said, but comprehending all, Maynard had become half frantic.

The man he had so lately embraced—whose name he had long known and honoured—to be thus hurried out of the world like a condemned dog!

He began to believe himself dreaming!

But he had heard the protesting cry, “ *C’est un assassinat !* ”

He had repeated it himself, striking his heels against the door in hopes of effecting a diversion or delay.

He kept repeating it, with other speeches, till his voice became drowned in the detonation of that death-dealing volley.

And once again he gave utterance to it after the echoes had ceased, and the courtyard became quiet. It was heard by the members of the court-martial outside.

“You’ve got a madman there!” said the presiding officer. “Who is it, Virocq?”

“One of the same,” answered the sous-lieutenant of Zouaves. “A fellow as full of sedition as the one just disposed of.”

“Do you know his name?”

“No, Colonel. He’s a stranger — a foreigner.”

“Of what country?”

“Anglais—Américain. He’s been brought in from the Boulevards. My men took him up, and by my orders.”

“For what?”

“Interfering with their duty. That isn’t

all. I chanced to see him last night in the Café de Mil Colonne. He was there speaking against the government, and expressing pity for poor France."

"Indeed!"

"I should have answered him upon the spot, mon Colonel. But some of ours interfered to shield him, on the excuse of his being a stranger."

"That's no reason why he should be suffered to talk sedition here."

"I know it, Colonel."

"Are you ready to swear he has done so?"

"I am ready. A score of people were present. You hear how he talks now?"

"True—true!" answered the President of the court. "Bring him before us! His being a stranger shan't shield him. It's not a time to be nice about nationalities. English or American, such a tongue must be made silent. Comrades!" continued he, in a low

tone to the other members, "this fellow has been witness to—you understand? He must be tried; and if Virocq's charges are sufficient, should be *silenced*. You understand?"

A grim assent was given by the others, who knew they were but mocking justice. For that they had been specially selected—above all, their president, who was the notorious Colonel Gardotte.

Inside his cell Maynard could hear but little of what was said. The turbulence was still continued in the streets outside—the fusilade, and the firing of cannon. Other prisoners were being brought into the courtyard, that echoed the tread of troops and the clanking of steel scabbards. There was noise everywhere.

Withal, a word or two coming through the keyhole sounded ominous in his ears. He had seen the ruffian Virocq, and knew that beside such a man there must be danger.

Still he had no dread of being submitted to any very severe punishment—much less a trial for his life. He supposed he would be kept in prison till the *émeute* had passed over, and then examined for an act he was prepared to justify, and for which military men could not otherwise than acquit him. He was only chafing at the outrage he had endured, and the detention he was enduring. He little knew the nature of that *émeute*, nor its design.

In his experience of honest soldiery, he was incapable of comprehending the character of the Franco-Algerine brigands into whose hands he had fallen.

He had been startled by the assassination—for he could call it by no other name—of his fellow-prisoner. Still the latter had stood in a certain relationship to the men who had murdered him, that could not apply to himself. Moreover, he was a stranger, and not

answerable to them for his political leanings. He should appeal to his own country's flag for protection.

It did not occur to him that, in the midst of a revolution, and among such reckless executioners, no flag might be regarded.

He had but little time to reflect thus. While he was yet burning with indignation at the atrocious tragedy just enacted, the door of his cell was once more flung open, and he was dragged out into the presence of the court.

"Your name?" haughtily demanded the President.

Maynard made answer by giving it.

"Of what country?"

"An Irishman—a British subject, if you prefer it."

"It matters not, monsieur! All are alike here; more especially in times like these. We can make no distinction among those

who sow sedition. What is your accusation, Lieutenant Virocq?"

With a tissue of falsehoods, such as might have brought blushes to the cheek of a harlot, the Zouave officer told his story.

Maynard was almost amazed with its lying ingenuity. He disdained to contradict it.

"What's the use, messieurs?" he said, addressing himself to the court. "I do not acknowledge your right to try me—least of all, by a drum-head court-martial. I call upon you to suspend these proceedings. I appeal to the Embassy of my country!"

"We have no time for application to Embassies, monsieur. You may acknowledge our right or not—just as it pleases you. We hold and intend exercising it. And notably on your noble self."

The ruffian was even satirical.

"Gentlemen," he continued, addressing himself to the other members, "you've heard

the charge and the defence. Is the accused guilty, or not?"

The vote was taken, beginning with a scurvy-looking sous-lieutenant, the junior of the court. This creature, knowing what was expected of him, pronounced:

"Coupable!"

The terrible word went round the drum, without a dissentient voice; and was quick followed by the still more terrible phrase, pronounced by the President:

"Condamné à mort!"

Maynard started, as if a shot had been fired at him. Once more did he mutter to himself:

"Am I dreaming?"

But, no, the bleeding corpse of his late fellow-prisoner, seen in a corner of the yard, was too real. So too the serious, scowling faces before him, with the platoon of uniformed executioners standing a little apart,

and making ready to carry out the murderous decree !

Everything around told him it was no dream —no jest ; but a dread, appalling reality !

No wonder it appalled him. No wonder that in this hour of peril he should recall those words late heard, “I’ll come to you ! I will come !” No wonder his glance turned anxiously toward the entrance door !

But she who had spoken them came not. Even if she had, what could she have done ? A young girl, an innocent child, what would her intercession avail with those merciless men who had made up their minds to his execution ?

She could not know where they had taken him. In the crowded, turbulent street, or while descending to it, she must have lost sight of him, and her inquiries would be answered too late !

He had no hopes of her coming there.

None of ever again seeing her, on this side the grave!

The thought was agony itself. It caused him to turn like a tiger upon judge and accuser; and give tongue to the wrath swelling within his bosom.

His speeches were met only with jeers and laughter!

And soon were they unheeded. Fresh prisoners were being brought in—fresh victims like himself, to be condemned over the drum!

The court no longer claimed his attendance.

He was left to Virocq, and his uniformed executioners.

Two of these laying hold, forced him up against the wall, close to the corpse of the Red republican.

He was manacled and could make no resistance. None would have availed him.

The soldiers stood waiting for the command
“ *Tirez !* ”

In another instant it would have been heard ; for it was forming on the lips of the Zouave lieutenant.

Fate willed it otherwise. Before it could be given, the outer door opened, admitting a man, whose presence caused a sudden suspension of the proceedings.

Hurrying across the courtyard, he threw himself between the soldiers and their victim ; at the same time drawing a flag from beneath his coat, and spreading it over the condemned man.

Even the drunken Zouaves dared not fire through that flag. It was the Royal Standard of England !

But there was a double protection for the prisoner. Almost at the same instant, another man stepped hastily across the courtyard and flouted a second flag in the eyes of the disappointed executioners !

It claimed equal respect, for it was the

banner of the Stars and Stripes—the emblem of the only true Republic on earth.

Maynard had served under both flags, and for a moment he felt his affections divided.

He knew not to whom he was indebted for the last ; but when he reflected who had sent the first—for it was Sir George Vernon who bore it—his heart trembled with a joy far sweeter than could have been experienced by the mere thought of delivery from death !

CHAPTER XIV.

ONCE MORE IN WESTBOURNE.

ONCE more in the British metropolis, Mr. Swinton was seated in his room.

It was the same set of "furnished apartments," containing that cane chair with which he had struck his ill-starred wife.

She was there, too, though not seated upon the chair.

Reclined along a common horse-hair sofa with squab and cushions hard and scuffed, she was reading one of De Kock's novels. In translation. Fan was not master of the French tongue, though skilled in many of those ac-

complishments for which France has obtained special notoriety.

It was after breakfast time, though the cups and saucers were still upon the table.

A common white-metal teapot, the heel of a half-quartern loaf, the head and tail of a herring, seen upon a blue willow pattern plate, told that the meal had not been Epicurean.

Swinton was smoking "bird's-eye" in a briar-root pipe. It would have been a cigar, had his exchequer allowed it.

Never in his life had this been so low. He had spent his last shilling in pursuit of the Girdwoods—in keeping their company in Paris; from which they, as he himself, had just returned to London.

As yet success had not crowned his scheme; but appeared distant as ever. The store-keeper's widow, notwithstanding her aspirations after a titled alliance, was from a country

whose people are proverbially "cute." She was, at all events, showing herself prudent, as Mr. Swinton discovered in a conversation held with her on the eve of their departure from Paris.

It was on a subject of no slight importance, originating in a proposal on his part to become her son-in-law. It was introductory to an offer he intended making to the young lady herself.

But the offer was not made, Mrs. Girdwood having given reasons for its postponement.

They seemed somewhat unsubstantial, leaving him to suppose he might still hope.

The true reason was not made known to him ; which was, that the American mother had become suspicious about his patent of nobility. After all, he might not be a lord. And this notwithstanding his perfect playing of the part, which the quondam guardsman,

having jostled a good deal against lords, was enabled to do.

She liked the man much—he flattered her sufficiently to deserve it—and used every endeavour to make her daughter like him. But she had determined, before things should go any further, to know something of his family. There was something strange in his still travelling *incognito*. The reasons he assigned for it were not satisfactory. Upon this point she must get thoroughly assured. England was the place to make the inquiry; and thither had she transported herself and her belongings—as before, putting up at the aristocratic Clarendon.

To England Swinton had followed, allowing only a day to elapse.

By staying longer in Paris he would have been in pawn. He had just sufficient cash to clear himself, from the obscure hotel where he had stopped, pay for a Boulogne

boat, and a "bus" from London Bridge to his lodgings in far Westbourne; where he found his Fan not a shilling richer than himself. Hence that herring for breakfast, eaten on the day after his return.

He was poor in spirits as in purse. Although Mrs. Girdwood had not stated the true reason for postponing her daughter's reception of his marriage proposal, he could conjecture it. He felt pretty sure, that the widow had come to England to make inquiries about him.

And what must they result in? Exposure! How could it be otherwise? His name was known in certain circles of London. So also his character. If she should get into these, his marriage scheme would be frustrated, at once and for ever.

And he had become sufficiently acquainted with her shrewdness, to know she would never accept him for a son-in-law, without

being certain about the title—which in her eyes alone rendered him eligible.

If his game was not yet up, the cards left in his hand were poor. More than ever did they require skilful playing.

What should be his next move?

It was about this his brain was busy, as he sat pulling away at his pipe.

“Any one called since I’ve been gone?” he asked of his wife, without turning toward her.

Had he done so, he might have observed a slight start caused by the inquiry. She answered, hesitatingly :

“Oh ! no—yes—yes—now I think of it. I had a visitor—one.”

“Who?”

“Sir Robert Cottrell. You remember our meeting him at Brighton?”

“Of course I remember it. Not likely to forget the mean puppy. How came he to call?”

“He expected to see you.”

“Indeed, did he! How did he know where we were living?”

“Oh! that. I met him one day as I was passing through Kensington Gardens, near the end of the Long Walk. He asked me where we were staying. At first I didn’t intend telling him. But he said he wanted particularly to see you; and so I gave him your address.”

“I wasn’t at home!”

“I told him that; but said I expected you every day. He came to inquire if you had come back.”

“Did he? What a wonderful deal he cared about my coming back. In the Long Walk you met him? I suppose you have been showing yourself in the Row every day?”

“No I haven’t, Richard. I’ve only been there once or twice. You can’t blame me

for that? I'd like to know who could stay everlastingly here, in these paltry apartments, with that shrewish landlady constantly popping out and in, as if to see whether I'd carried off the contents of our trunks. Heaven knows, it's a wretched existence at best; but absolutely hideous inside these lodgings!"

Glancing around the cheaply-furnished parlour, seeing the head and tail of the herring, with the other scraps of their poor repast, Swinton could not be otherwise than impressed with the truth of his wife's words.

Their tone, too, had a satisfying effect. It was no longer that of imperious contradiction, such as he had been accustomed to for twelve months after marriage. This had ceased on that day, when the leg of a chair coming in contact with his beloved's crown, had left a slight cicatrice upon her left temple—like a stain in statuary marble.

From that hour the partner of his bosom had shown herself a changed woman—at least toward himself. Notwithstanding the many quarrels, and recriminative bickerings, that had preceded it, it was the first time he had resorted to personal violence. And it had produced its effect. Coward as she knew him to be, he had proved himself brave enough to bully her. She had feared him ever since. Hence her trepidation as she made answer to his inquiry as to whether any one had called.

There was a time when Frances Wilder would not have trembled at such a question, nor stammered in her reply.

She started again, and again showed signs of confusion, as the shuffling of feet on the flags outside was followed by a knock at the door.

It was a double one; not the violent repeat of the postman, but the rat-tat-tat given either

by a gentleman or lady—from its gentleness more like the latter.

“Who can it be?” asked Swinton, taking the pipe from between his teeth. “Nobody for us, I hope.”

In London, Mr. Swinton did not long for unexpected visitors. He had too many “kites” abroad, to relish the ring of the door-bell, or the more startling summons of the knocker.

“Can’t be for us,” said his wife, in a tone of mock confidence. “There’s no one likely to be calling; unless some of your old friends have seen you as you came home. Did you meet any one on the way?”

“No, nobody saw me,” gruffly returned the husband.

“There’s a family upstairs—in the drawing-rooms. I suppose it’s for them, or the people of the house.”

The supposition was contradicted by a dia-

logue heard outside, in the hall. It was as follows :

“Mrs. Swinton at home?”

The inquiry was in a man’s voice, who appeared to have passed in from the steps.

“Yis, sirr!” was the reply of the Irish janitress, who had answered the knock.

“Give my card; and ask the lady if I can see her.”

“By Jove! that’s Cottrell!” muttered the ex-guardsman, recognizing the voice.

“Sir Robert Cottrell” was upon the card brought in by the maid-of-all-work.

“Show him in!” whispered Swinton to the servant, without waiting to ask permission from Fan; who, expressing surprise at the unexpected visit, sprang to her feet, and glided back into the bedroom.

There was a strangeness in the fashion of his wife’s retreat, which the husband could scarce help perceiving. He took no notice

of it, however, his mind at the moment busied with a useful idea that had suddenly suggested itself.

Little as he liked Sir Robert Cottrell, or much as he may have had imaginings about the object of his visit, Swinton at that moment felt inclined to receive him. The odour of the salt herring was in his nostrils; and he was in a mood to prefer the perfume that exhales from the cambric handkerchief of a *débonnaire* baronet—such as he new Sir Robert to be.

It was with no thought of calling his quondam Brighton acquaintance to account that he directed the servant to show him in.

And in he was shown.

CHAPTER XV.

A CAUTIOUS BARONET.

THE baronet looked a little blank, as the open parlour-door discovered inside a "party" he had no intention of calling upon.

Accustomed to such surprises, however, he was not disconcerted. He had some knowledge of the ex-guardsman's character. He knew he was in ill-luck; and that under such circumstances he would not be exactingly inquisitive.

"Aw, Swinton, my dear fellow!" he exclaimed, holding out his kid-gloved hand. "Delighted to see you again. Madame told me she expected you home. I just dropped

in, hoping to find you returned. Been to Paris, I hear?"

"I have," said Swinton, taking the hand with a show of cordiality.

"Terrible times over there. Wonder you came off with a whole skin!"

"By Jove, it's about all I brought off with me."

"Aw, indeed! What mean you by that?"

"Well; I went over to get some money that's been long owing me. Instead of getting it, I lost what little I carried across."

"How did you do that, my dear fellow?"

"Well, the truth is, I was tempted into card playing with some French officers, I chanced to meet at the Mille Colonnes. It was their cursed *écarté*. They knew the game better than I; and very soon cleared me out. I had barely enough to bring me back again. I thank God I'm here once more; though how I'm going to weather it

this winter, heaven only knows! You'll excuse me, Sir Robert, for troubling you with this confession of my private affairs. I'm in such a state of mind, I scarce know what I'm saying. Confound France and Frenchmen! I don't go among them again; not if I know it."

Sir Robert Cottrell, though supposed to be rich, was not accustomed to squandering money—upon men. With women he was less penurious; though with these only a spendthrift, when their smiles could not be otherwise obtained. He was one of those gallants who prefer making conquests at the cheapest possible rates; and, when made, rarely spend money to secure them. Like the butterfly, he liked flitting from flower to flower.

That he had not dropped in hoping to find Mr. Swinton, but had come on purpose to visit his wife, the craven husband knew just as well as if he had openly avowed it. And

the motive, too; all the more from such a shallow excuse.

It was upon the strength of this knowledge that the ex-guardsman was so communicative about his financial affairs. It was a delicate way of making it known, that he would not be offended by the offer of a trifling loan.

Sir Robert was in a dilemma. A month earlier he would have much less minded it. But during that month he had met Mrs. Swinton several times, in the Long Walk, as elsewhere. He had been fancying his conquest achieved, and did not feel disposed to pay for a triumph already obtained.

For this reason he was slow to perceive the hint so delicately thrown out to him.

Swinton reflected on a way to make it more understandable. The *débris* of the frugal *déjeuner* came to his assistance.

“Look!” said he, pointing to the picked bones of the herring, with an affectation of

gaiety, "look there, Sir Robert! You might fancy it to be Friday. That fine fish was purchased with the last penny in my pocket. To-morrow *is* Friday; and I suppose I shall have to keep Lent still more austerely. Ha! ha! ha!"

There was no resisting such an appeal as this. The close-fisted aristocrat felt himself fairly driven into a corner.

"My dear fellow!" said he, "don't talk in that fashion. If a fiver will be of any service to you, I hope you will do me the favour to accept it. I know you won't mind it from me?"

"Sir Robert, it is too kind. I—I——"

"Don't mention it. I shouldn't think of offering you such a paltry trifle; but just now my affairs are a little queerish. I dropped a lot upon the last Derby; and my lawyer is trying to raise a further mortgage on my Devonshire estate. If that can be effected,

things will, of course, be different. Meanwhile, take this. It may pass you over your present difficulty, till something turns up."

"Sir Robert, I——"

"No apology, Swinton! It is I who owe it, for the shabby sum."

The ex-guardsman ceased to resist; and the five-pound note, pressed into his palm, was permitted to remain there.

"By-the-bye, Swinton," said the baronet, as if to terminate the awkward scene by obliging the borrower in a more business-like way, "why don't you try to get something from the Government? Excuse a fellow for taking the liberty; but it seems to me, a man of your accomplishments ought to stand a chance."

"Not the slightest, Sir Robert! I have no interest; and if I had, there's that ugly affair that got me out of the Guards. You know the story; and therefore I needn't tell it you.

That would be sure to come up, if I made any application."

"All stuff, my dear fellow! Don't let that stand in your way. It might, if you wanted to get into the Household, or be made a bishop of. You don't aspire to either, I presume?"

The ex-guardsman gave a lugubrious laugh.

"No!" he said. "I'd be contented with something less. Just now my ambition don't soar extravagantly high."

"Suppose you try Lord —— who has government influence? In these troublous times there's no end of employment, and for men whose misfortunes don't need to be called to remembrance. Yours won't stand in the way. I know his lordship personally. He's not at all exacting."

"You know him, Sir Robert?"

"Intimately. And if I'm not mistaken, he's just the man to serve you; that is, by

getting you some appointment. The diplomatic service has grown wonderfully, since the breaking out of these revolutions. More especially the *secret* branch of it. I've reason to know that enormous sums are now spent upon it. Then, why shouldn't *you* try to get a pull out of the secret service chest?"

Swinton relit his pipe, and sat cogitating.

"A pipe don't become a guardsman," jokingly remarked his guest. "The favourites of the Foreign Office smoke only regalias."

Swinton received this sally with a smile, that showed the dawning of a new hope.

"Take one?" continued the baronet, presenting his gold-clasped case.

Swinton pitched the briar-root aside, and set fire to the cigar.

"You are right, Sir Robert," he said; "I ought to try for something. It's very good of you to give me the advice. But how am I

to follow it? I have no acquaintance with the nobleman you speak of; nor have any of my friends."

"Then you don't count me as one of them?"

"Dear Cottrell! Don't talk that way! After what's passed between us, I should be an ungrateful fellow, if I didn't esteem you as the first of them—perhaps the only friend I have left."

"Well, I've spoken plainly. Haven't I said that I know Lord ——; well enough to give you a letter of introduction to him? I won't say it will serve any purpose; you must take your chances of that. I can only promise that he will receive you; and if you're not *too particular* as to the nature of the employment, I think he may get you something. You understand me, Swinton?"

"I particular! Not likely, Sir Robert, living in this mean room, with the remem-

brance of that luxurious breakfast I've just eaten—myself and my poor wife!”

“Aw—by the way, I owe madame an apology, for having so long neglected to ask after her. I hope she is well?”

“Thank you! Well as the dear child can be expected, with such trouble upon us.”

“Shall I not have the pleasure of seeing her?”

The visitor asked the question without any pretence of indifference. He felt it—just then, not desiring to encounter her in such company.

“I shall see, Sir Robert,” replied the husband, rising from his chair, and going toward the bedroom. “I rather suspect Fan’s *en déshabille* at this hour.”

Sir Robert secretly hoped that she was. Under the circumstances, an interview with her could only be awkward.

His wish was realized. She was not only

en déshabille, but in bed—with a sick headache! She begged that the baronet would excuse her from making appearance!

This was the report brought back from the bedroom by her go-between of a husband. It remained only for the visitor to make good his promise about the letter of introduction.

He drew up to the table, and wrote it out, *currente calamo*.

He did not follow the usual fashion: by leaving the envelope open. There was a clause or two in the letter he did not desire the ex-guardsman to become acquainted with. It concluded with the words: "*Mr. Swinton is a gentleman who would suit for any service your Lordship may be pleased to obtain for him. He is a disappointed man.*"

Wetting the gum with the tip of his aristocratic tongue, he closed the envelope; and handed the epistle to his host.

"I know," said he, "Lord A—— will be

glad to serve you. You might see him at the Foreign Office; but don't go there. There are too many fellows hanging about, who had better not know what you're after. Take it to his lordship's private residence in Park Lane. In a case like your's, I know he'd prefer receiving you there. You had better go at once. There's so many chances of your being forestalled—a host of applicants hungering for something of the same. His lordship is likely to be at home about three in the afternoon. I'll call here soon after, to learn how you've prospered. Bye, my dear fellow! good-bye!"

Regloving his slender aristocratic fingers, the baronet withdrew—leaving the ex-guardsmen in possession of an epistle, that might have much influence on his future fate.

CHAPTER XVI.

A SCENE IN PARK LANE.

IN Park Lane, as all know, fronting upon Hyde Park, are some of the finest residences in London. They are mansions, mostly inhabited by England's aristocracy; many of them by the proudest of its nobility. And Apsley House—the gift of the nation, to him who helped to rob it of almost the last remnant of its liberty—is at the end of them; with an equestrian statue of the great soldier himself standing conspicuously in front—hideous as sculptor could make it.

The head and hand of the artist may have

been guided by thoughts of the foul work achieved by the head and hand of the man he was commanded to make model of.

Not less a spoil of the people are several others of these same Park Lane palaces. Notably one belonging to a nobleman, and member of Parliament, throughout his long career in one office or another. A man who entered the diplomatic service, with barely fortune enough to keep him dandily-dressed—his then greatest aspiration—but who left it, and life at the same time, the owner of broad acres and baronial residences in the country, with a mansion in town, less noted, though almost as grand as that of the great Duke himself!

And this out of a salary that would not have paid for a week's expenses of his living—certainly, not more than a week of those grand crushes, routs, and receptions given by him in the course of a single Season.

And yet the poor English people wonder why they are forced to migrate to America—to sever themselves from a home, loved as native land can be by any people—rudely to disrupt the fondest ties of affection—to endure the transit of a stormy ocean—the disgust of sea-sickness, and the immondity of a ship's steerage with all its horrors—but one remove milder than the middle passage of the manacled captive from the Cameroons!

And after all this, to strive and toil under a sky and in a climate that for one-half the year is simply abominable!

But the struggle is crowned by Liberty. Under its benign influence the toil is sweet, and the climate seems tempered to mildness. The burning heats of the Torrid zone and the icy chill of the Frigid, are less bitter to bear than the sting of despotism.

Hitherto the Irish have been the chief victims of this unwilling exodus: for chiefly

upon the ruin of their country have the proud palaces of Park Lane been erected.

But the time for an English emigration has come; and he, who wishes well to this brave people, will joy to know it is every day growing more active. Every soul — Saxon or Celt—landed on the American side of the Atlantic is a gain, not only to America, but Humanity.

The palaces of England, built by the unpaid labour of the English people, are driving them off.

In making these statements I anticipate the remark with which they will be met. I shall be told of the governmental jobbery and robbery in America—of its wholesale grandeur and extent.

I know all this; but I know also, that the Augean stables of New York, in which the "Citizens' Association" is busy with brush and broom, is a clean parlour compared with

the purlieus of Downing Street, Somerset House, Whitehall, and the Horse-Guards.

* * * * *

On that same day on which Sir Robert Cottrell had paid his unintentional visit to Mr. Richard Swinton, at the calling hour of the afternoon, an open park phaeton drawn by a pair of stylish ponies, with "flowing manes and tails," might have been seen driving along Park Lane, and drawing up in front of one of its splendid mansions, well known to be that of a nobleman of considerable distinction among his class.

The ribbons were held by a gentleman who appeared capable of manipulating them; by his side a lady equally suitable to the equipage; while an appropriate boy in top-boots and buttons occupied the back seat.

Though the gentleman was young and handsome, the lady young and beautiful, and the groom carefully got up, an eye, skilled in

livery decoration, could have told the turn-out to be one hired for the occasion.

It was hired, and by Richard Swinton; for it was he who wielded the whip; and his wife who gave grace to the equipage.

The ponies were guided with such skill that when checked up in front of the nobleman's residence, the phaeton stood right under the drawing-room windows.

In this there was a design.

The groom, skipping like a grasshopper from his perch, glided up the steps, rang the bell, and made the usual inquiry.

His lordship was "at home."

"You take the reins, Fan," said Swinton, stepping out of the phaeton. "Keep a tight hold on them, and don't let the ponies move from the spot they're in—not so much as an inch!"

Without comprehending the object of this exact order, Fan promised to obey it.

The remembrance of more than one scene, in which she had succumbed to her husband's violence, secured compliance with his request.

Having made it, the ex-guardsman ascended the steps ; presented his card ; and was shown into the drawing-room.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE POWER OF A PRETTY FACE.

It was the front room of a suite into which Mr. Swinton had been conducted—a large apartment furnished in splendid style.

For a time he was left alone, the footman, who officiated, having gone off with his card.

Around him were costly decorations—objects of *vertu* and *luxe*—duplicated in plate-glass mirrors over the mantel, and along the sides of the room, extending from floor to ceiling.

But Mr. Swinton looked not at the luxurious chattels, nor into the mirrors that reflected them.

On the moment of his being left to himself, he glided toward one of the windows ; and directed his glance into the street.

“ It will do,” he muttered to himself, with a satisfied air. “ Just in the right spot, and Fan—isn’t she the thing for it? By Jove ! she shows well. Never saw her look better in her life. If his lordship be the sort he’s got the name of being, I ought to get an appointment out of him. Sweet Fan ! I’ve made five pounds out of you this morning. You’re worth your weight in gold, or its equivalent. Hold up your head, my chick ! and show that pretty face of yours to the window ! You’re about to be examined, and as I’ve heard, by a connoisseur. Ha ! ha ! ha ! ”

The apostrophe was soliloquized, Fan was too far off to hear him.

The chuckling laugh that followed was interrupted by the re-entrance of the footman, who announced in ceremonial strain :

“His lordship will see you in the library.”

The announcement produced on his lordship's visitor the effect of a cold-water *douche*. His gaiety forsook him with the suddenness of a “shot.”

Nor did it return, when he discovered the library to be a somewhat sombre apartment, its walls bedecked with books, and the windows looking into a court-yard at the back. He had anticipated an interview in the drawing-room that commanded a view of the street.

It was a disappointment to be regretted, and, combined with the quiet gloom of the chamber into which he had been ushered, argued ill for the success of his application.

“Your business, sir?” demanded the august personage into whose presence he had penetrated.

The demand was not made in a tone of either rudeness or austerity. Lord—— was

noted for a suavity of manners, that, in the eyes of the uninitiated, gave him a character for benevolence !

In answer to it, the ex-guardsman presented his letter of introduction. He could do no more ; and stood awaiting the result.

But he reflected, how different this might be, if the interview had been taking place in the drawing-room, instead of that dismal repository of books ?

“ I am sorry, Mr. Swinton,” said his lordship, after reading Sir Robert’s letter ; “ sorry indeed, that I can do nothing to serve you. I don’t know of a post that isn’t filled. I have applicants coming to me every day, thinking I can do something for them. I should have been most happy to serve any friend of Sir Robert Cottrell, had it been in my power. I assure you, it isn’t.”

Richard Swinton was disconcerted—the more so that he had spent thirty shillings.

in chartering the pony phaeton with its attendant groom. It was part of the five pounds borrowed from the obliging baronet. It would be so much cash thrown away—the sprat lost without catching the salmon.

He stood without knowing what to say. The interview seemed at an end—his lordship appearing wearied of his presence, and wishing him to be gone.

At this crisis an accident came to his aid.

A squadron of “Coldstreams” was passing along the Park drive. Their bugle, sounding the “double quick,” was heard in the interior of the dwelling. His lordship, to ascertain the cause of the military movement, sprang up from the huge leathern chair, in which he had been seated, and passed suddenly into the drawing-room, leaving Mr. Swinton outside in the hall.

Through the window Lord —— saw the dragoons filing past. But his glance dwelt

not long upon them. Underneath, and close in to the curb-stone, was an object, to his eyes a hundred times more attractive than the bright uniforms of the Guards. It was a young and beautiful lady, seated in an open phaeton, and holding the reins—as if waiting for some one who had gone into a house.

It was in front of his own house: and the party absent from the phaeton must be inside. It should be Mr. Swinton, the very good-looking fellow, who was soliciting him for an appointment!

In a trice the applicant, already half dismissed, was recalled into his presence—this time into the drawing-room.

“By the way, Mr. Swinton,” said he, “you may as well leave me your address. I’m anxious to oblige my friend Sir Robert; and although I can speak of nothing now, who knows——Ha! that lady in the carriage below. Is she of your belonging?”

“ My wife, your lordship.”

“ What a pity to have kept her waiting outside ! You should have brought her in with you.”

“ My lord, I could not take the liberty of intruding.”

“ Oh, nonsense ! my dear sir ! A lady can never intrude. Well, leave your address ; and if anything should turn up, be sure I shall remember you. I am most anxious to serve Cottrell.”

Swinton left the address ; and with an obsequious salute, parted from the dispenser of situations.

As he drove back along the pavement of Piccadilly, he reflected to himself, that the pony equipage had not been chartered in vain.

He now knew the character of the man to whom he had addressed his solicitation.

CHAPTER XVIII.

TO THE COUNTRY.

THERE is but one country in the world where country-life is thoroughly understood, and truly enjoyable. It is England !

True, this enjoyment is confined to the few—to England's gentry. Her farmer knows nought of it; her labourer still less.

But the life of an English country gentleman leaves little to be desired !

In the morning he has the chase, or the shooting party, complete in their kind, and both varied according to the character of the game. In the evening he sits down to a dinner, as Lucullian as French cooks can

make it, in the company of men and women the most accomplished upon earth.

In the summer there are excursions, picnics, "garden parties;" and of late years the grand croquet gatherings—all ending in the same desirable dinner, with sometimes a dance in the drawing-room, to the family music of the piano; on rarer occasions, to the more inspiriting strains of a military band, brought from the nearest barracks, or the headquarters of volunteers, yeomanry, or militia.

In all this there is neither noise nor confusion; but the most perfect quiet and decorum. It could not be otherwise in a society composed of the flower of England's people—its nobility and squirearchy—equal in the social scale—alike spending their life in the cultivation of its graces.

It was not strange that Captain Maynard—a man with but few great friends, and lost to some of these, through his republican pro-

clivities—should feel slightly elated on receiving an invitation to a dinner as described.

A further clause in the note told him, he would be expected to stay a few days at the house of his host, and take part in the partridge-shooting that had but lately commenced.

The invitation was all the more acceptable coming from Sir George Vernon, of Vernon Hall, near Sevenoaks, Kent.

Maynard had not seen the British baronet since that day when the British flag, flung around his shoulders, saved him from being shot. By the conditions required to get him clear of his Parisian scrape, he had to return *instantly* to England; in the metropolis of which he had ever since been residing.

Not in idleness. Revolutions at an end, he had flung aside his sword, and taken to the pen. During the summer he had produced a romance, and placed it in the hands of a

publisher. He was expecting it soon to appear.

He had lately written to Sir George—on hearing that the latter had got back to his own country—a letter expressing grateful thanks for the protection that had been extended to him.

But he longed also to thank the baronet in person. The tables were now turned. His own service had been amply repaid; and he hesitated to take advantage of the old invitation—in fear of being deemed an intruder. Under these circumstances the new one was something more than welcome.

The village of Sevenoaks is at no great distance from London. With a glass, and on a clear day, from the top of St. Paul's dome, you can see the spire of its church. For all that, it is surrounded by scenery as retired and rural as can be found in the shires of England—the charming scenery of Kent.

It is only of late years that the railway-whistle has waked the echoes of those deep secluded dales stretching around Sevenoaks.

With a heart attuned to happiness, and throbbing with anticipated pleasure, did the late revolutionary leader ride along its roads. Not on horseback, but in a "fly" chartered at the nearest railway station, to take him to the family mansion of the Vernons, which was to be found at about four miles' distance from the village.

The carriage was an open one, the day clear and fine, the country looking its best—the "Swedes" showing green, the stubble yellow, the woods and copses clad in the ochre-coloured livery of Autumn. The corn had been all cut. The partridges, in full covey and still comparatively tame, were seen straying through the "stubs;" while the pheasants, already thinned off by shot, kept more shy along the selvedge of the

cover. He might think, what fine sport was promised him!

He was thinking not of this. The anticipated pleasure of shooting parties had no place in his thoughts. They were all occupied by the image of that fair child, first seen on the storm-deck of an Atlantic steamer, and last in a balcony overlooking the garden of the Tuileries: for he had not seen Blanche Vernon since.

But he had often thought of her. Often! Every day, every hour!

And his soul was now absorbed by the same contemplation—in recalling the souvenirs of every scene, or incident, in which she had figured—his first view of her, followed by that strange foreshadowing—her face reflected in the cabin mirror—the episode in the Mersey, that had brought him still nearer—her backward look, as they parted on the landing-stage at Liverpool—

and, last of all, that brief glance he had been enabled to obtain, as, borne along by brutal force, he beheld her in the balcony above him.

From this remembrance did he derive his sweetest reflection. Not from the sight of her there; but the thought that through her interference he had been rescued from an ignominious death, and a fate perhaps never to be recorded! He at least knew, that he owed his life to her father's influence.

And now was he to be brought face to face with this fair young creature—within the sacred precincts of the family circle, and under the sanction of parental rule—to be allowed every opportunity of studying her character—perhaps moulding it to his own secret desires!

No wonder that, in the contemplation of such a prospect, he took no heed of the partridges straying through the stubble, or

the pheasants skulking along the edge of their cover!

It was nigh two years since he had first looked upon her. She would now be fifteen, or near to it. In that quick, constrained glance given to the balcony above, he saw that she had grown taller and bigger.

So much the better, thought he, as bringing nearer the time when he should be able to test the truth of his presentiment.

Though sanguine, he was not confident. How could he? A nameless, almost homeless adventurer, a wide gulf lay between him and this daughter of an English baronet, noted in name as for riches. What hope had he of being able to bridge it?

None, save that springing from hope itself: perhaps only the wish father to the thought.

It might be all an illusion. In addition to the one great obstacle of unequal wealth—the

rank he had no reason to consider—there might be many others.

Blanche Vernon was an only child, too precious to be lightly bestowed—too beautiful to go long before having her heart besieged. Already it may have been stormed and taken.

And by one nearer her own age—perhaps some one her father had designed for the assault.

While thus cogitating, the cloud that flung its shadow over Maynard's face told how slight was his faith in fatalism.

It commenced clearing away, as the fly was driven up to the entrance of Vernon Park, and the gates were flung open to receive him.

It was quite gone when the proprietor of that park, meeting him in the vestibule of the mansion, bade him warm welcome to its hospitality.

CHAPTER XIX.

AT THE MEET.

THERE is perhaps no more superb sight than the “meet” of an English hunting-field—whether it be staghounds or fox. Even the grand panoply of war, with its serried ranks and braying band, is not more exciting than the tableau of scarlet coats grouped over the green, the hounds bounding impatiently around the gold-laced huntsman; here and there a horse rearing madly, as if determined on dismounting his rider; and at intervals the mellow horn, and sharply-cracked whip keeping the dogs in check.

The picture is not complete without its

string of barouches and pony phaetons, filled with their fair occupants; a grand "drag" driven by the duke, and carrying the duchess; beside it the farmer in his market cart; and outside of all the pedestrian circle of smock-frocks, "Hob, Dick, and Hick, with clubs and clouted shoon"—their dim attire contrasting with the scarlet—though each—if it be a stag-hunt—with bright hopes of winning the bounty money by being in at the death of the deer.

At such a meet was Captain Maynard, mounted upon a steed from the stables of Sir George Vernon. Beside him was the baronet himself, and near by his daughter, seated in an open barouche, with Sabina for her sole carriage companion.

The tawny-skinned and turbaned attendant—more like what might have been seen at an Oriental tiger hunt—nevertheless added to the picturesqueness of the tableau.

It was a grouping not unknown in those districts of England, where the returned East Indian "nabobs" have settled down to spend the evening of their days.

In such places even a Hindoo prince, in the costume of Tippoo Sahib, not unfrequently makes appearance.

The day was as it should be, for a stag-hunt. There was a clear sky, an atmosphere favourable to the scent, and cool enough for putting a horse to his speed. Moreover, the hounds had been well rested.

The gentlemen were jocund, the ladies wreathed in smiles, the smock-frocks staring at them with a pleased expression upon their stolid faces.

All appeared happy, as they waited for the huntsman's horn to signal the "uncarting" of the stag.

This was known to be a noble buck, from the royal deer-park of Windsor.

There was one in that gathering who shared not its gaiety ; a man mounted upon a chestnut hunter, and halted alongside the barouche that carried Blanche Vernon.

This man was Maynard.

Why did he not participate in the general joy ?

The reason might have been discovered on the opposite side of the barouche, in the shape of an individual on horseback also, who called Blanche Vernon his cousin.

Like Maynard too, he was staying at Vernon Park—a guest admitted to a still closer intimacy than himself.

By name Scudamore—Frank Scudamore—he was a youth still boyish and beardless. All the more, on this account, was the man of mature age uneasy at his presence.

But he was handsome besides ; fair-haired and of florid hue, a sort of Saxon Endymion or Adonis.

And she of kindred race and complexion—of nearly equal age—how could she other than admire him?

There could be no mistaking his admiration of her. Maynard had discovered it—in an instant—on the day when the three had been first brought together.

And often afterward had he observed it; but never more than now, as the youth, leaning over in his saddle, endeavoured to engross the attention of his cousin.

And he appeared to succeed. She had neither look nor word for any one else. She heeded not the howling of the hounds; she was not thinking of the stag; she was listening only to the pretty speeches of young Scudamore.

All this Maynard saw with bitter chagrin. Its bitterness was only tempered by reflecting: how little right he had to expect it otherwise.

True he had done Blanche Vernon a service.

He believed it to have been repaid; for it must have been through her intercession he had been rescued from the Zouaves. But the act on her part was one of simple reciprocity—the responsive gratitude of a child!

How much more would he have liked being the recipient of those sentiments, seemingly lavished on young Scudamore, and spoken in half-whisper into his ear.

As the ex-captain sate chafing in his saddle, the reflection passed through his mind:

“There is too much hair upon my face. She prefers the cheek that is beardless.”

The jealous thought must have descended to his heels; since, striking them against the flanks of his horse, he rode wide away from the carriage!

And it must have continued to excite him throughout the chase; for plying the spur, he kept close to the pack; and was first in at the death.

That day a steed was returned to the stables of Sir George Vernon with panting reins and bleeding ribs.

A guest sat down to his dinner-table — a stranger among the scarlet-coated hunters around him, who had won their respect by having ridden well up to the hounds.

CHAPTER XX.

IN THE COVER.

THE day after the stag-hunt it was pheasant-shooting.

The morning was one of the finest known to the climate of England: a bright blue sky, with a warm October sun.

“The ladies are going to accompany us to the cover,” said Sir George, making glad the hearts of his sportsmen guests. “So, gentlemen,” he added, “you must have a care how you shoot.”

The expedition was not a distant one. The pheasant preserves of Vernon Park lay contiguous to the house, between the pleasure-

grounds and the "home farm." They consisted of a scrub wood, with here and there a large tree overshadowing the undergrowth of hazel, holly, white birch, gorse, dogwood, and briar. They extended over a square mile of hilly land, interspersed with deep dells and soft shaded vales, through which meandered many a crystal rivulet.

It was a noted cover for woodcock; but too early for these, and pheasant-killing was to be the pastime of the day.

After breakfast the shooting party set forth. The ladies were, many of them, staying at the house; the wives, sisters, and daughters of Sir George's gentlemen guests. But there were others invited to the sport—the *élite* of the neighbourhood.

All went out together—guided by the head gamekeeper, and followed by spaniels and retrievers.

Once clear of the grounds, the business of

the day began ; and the banging of double-barrelled guns soon put a period to the conversation that had continued in a general way up to the edge of the woodland.

Once inside the cover, the shooting party soon became dismembered. Small groups, each consisting of two or three ladies and the same number of gentlemen, strayed off through the thicket, as chance, the ground, or the gamekeepers conducted them.

With one of these went Maynard, though not the one he would have elected to accompany. A stranger, he had no choice, but was thrown along with the first set that offered—a couple of country squires—who cared far more for the pheasants than the fair creatures who had come to see them slaughtered.

With this trio of shooters there was not a single lady. One or two had started along with them. But the squires, being keen

sportsmen, soon left their long-skirted companions following in the distance; and Maynard was compelled either to keep up with them and their dogs, or abandon the shooting altogether.

Treading on with the sportsmen he soon lost sight of the ladies, who fell far behind. He had no great regret at their defection. None of them chanced to be either very young or very attractive, and they were luckily attended by a servant. He had bidden adieu to them by exhibiting a pretended zeal in pheasant-shooting far from being felt, and which he would scarce have done had Sir George Vernon's daughter been one of their number.

He was far from feeling cheerful as he strode through the preserves. He was troubled with an unpleasant reflection—arising from an incident observed. He had seen the baronet's daughter pair off with the party in

which shot young Scudamore. As she had done so unsolicited, she must have preferred this party to any other.

The ex-officer was not so expert in his shooting as he had shown himself at the hunt.

Several times he missed altogether; and once or twice the strong-winged gallinaceæ rose whirring before him, without his attempting to pull trigger or even elevate his gun!

The squires, who on the day before had witnessed his dexterity in the saddle, rather wondered at his being such a poor shot.

They little dreamt of what was disqualifying him. They only observed that he was abstracted, but guessed not the cause.

After a time he and they became separated; they thinking only of the pheasants, he of that far brighter bird, in some distant quarter of the cover, gleaming amidst the foliage, and radiating delight all around.

Perhaps alone, in some silent dell, with young Scudamore by her side—authorized to keep apart through their cousinly relationship—he, perhaps, pouring into her ear the soft, confident whisperings of a cousin's love!

The thought rendered Maynard sad.

It might have excited him to anger; but he knew he had no pretext. Between him and the daughter of Sir George Vernon, as yet, only a few speeches had been exchanged; these only commonplace expressions of civility, amidst a surrounding of people, her friends and relatives. He had not even found opportunity to talk over those incidents that had led to the present relationship between them.

He longed for, and yet dreaded it!

That presentiment, at first so confidently felt, had proved a deception.

The very opposite was the impression now upon him as he stood alone in the silent

thicket, with the words falling mechanically from his lips :

“She can never be mine!”

“You will, Blanche? You will?” were other words not spoken by himself, but heard by him, as he stood within a holly copse, screened by its evergreen frondage.

It was young Scudamore who was talking, and in a tone of appealing tenderness.

There was no reply, and the same words, with a slight addition, were repeated :

“You will promise it, Blanche? You will?”

Stilling his breath, and the wild beating of his heart, Maynard listened for the answer. From the tone of the questioner’s voice he knew it to be a dialogue, and that the cousins were alone.

He soon saw that they were. Walking side by side along a wood-road, they came opposite to the spot where he was standing.

They stopped. He could not see them. Their persons were concealed by the prickly fascicles of the holly hanging low. These did not hinder him from hearing every word exchanged between the two.

How sweet to his ears was the answer given by the girl.

“I won’t, cousin Frank! I won’t!”

He knew not its full significance, nor the nature of the promise appealed for.

But the *éclaircissement* was near, and this gave him a still greater gratification.

“Indeed,” said Scudamore, reproachfully, “I know why you won’t promise me. Yes, I know it.”

“What do you know, Frank?”

“Only, what everybody can see: that you’ve taken a liking to this Captain Maynard, who’s old enough to be your father, or grandfather! Ah! and if your father finds it out—well, I shan’t say what——”

“And if it were so,” daringly retorted the daughter of the baronet, “who could blame me? You forget that the gentleman saved my life! I’m sure I’d have been drowned but for his noble behaviour. Courageous, too. You should have seen the big waves wanting to swallow me. And there wasn’t any one else to run the risk of stretching forth a hand to me! He *did* save my life. Is it any wonder I should feel grateful to him?”

“You’re more than grateful, Blanche! You’re *in love* with him!”

“In love with him! Ha! ha! ha! What do you mean by that, cousin Scudamore?”

“Oh! you needn’t make light of it. You know well enough!”

“I know that you’re very disagreeable, Frank; you’ve been so all the morning.”

“Have I? I shan’t be so any longer—in your company. Since you don’t seem to care

for mine, no doubt you'll be pleased at my taking leave of you. I presume you can find the way home without me? You've only to keep up this wood-road. It'll bring you to the park-gate."

"You needn't concern yourself about me," haughtily rejoined the daughter of Sir George. "I fancy I can find my way home without any assistance from my gallant cousin Scudamore."

The provoking irony of this last speech brought the dialogue to an end.

Irritated by it, the young sportsman turned his back upon his pretty partner, and whistling to his spaniel, broke abruptly away, soon disappearing behind a clump of copsewood.

CHAPTER XXI.

A RECREANT SPORTSMAN.

“I OWE you an apology, Miss Vernon,” said Maynard, coming out from under the hollies.

“For what, sir?” asked the young girl, startled by his sudden appearance, but in an instant becoming calm.

“For having overheard the closing of a conversation between you and your cousin.”

She stood without making rejoinder, as if recalling what had been said.

“It was quite unintentional, I assure you,” added the intruder. “I should have disclosed myself sooner, but I—I can scarce tell what hindered me. The truth is, I——”

“Oh, sir,” interrupted she, as if to relieve him from his evident embarrassment, “it doesn’t in the least signify. Cousin Scudamore was talking some nonsense—that’s all.”

“I’m glad you’re not angry with me. Though I’ve reason to be ashamed of my conduct, I must be candid and tell you, that I scarce deem it a misfortune having overheard you. It is so pleasant to listen to one’s own praises.”

“But who was praising you?”

The question was asked with an air of *naïveté* that might have been mistaken for coquetry.

Perhaps she had forgotten what she had said.

“Not your cousin Scudamore,” replied Maynard, with a smile. “He who thinks me old enough to be your grandfather.”

“Ha! ha!” laughed Miss Vernon. “You mustn’t mind what Frank says. He’s always offending somebody.”

“I do not mind it. I couldn’t, after hearing how he was contradicted. A thousand thanks to my generous defender!”

“Oh, sir, what I said of you was not meant for praise. I was but speaking the truth. But for you, I should have been drowned. I am sure of it.”

“And but for *you* I should have been shot. Is not that also the truth?”

She did not make immediate reply. There was a blush on her cheek, strangely contrasting with a shadow that came over her face.

“I do not like the thought of any one being in my debt—not even you, Miss Vernon! Confess that we are quits, then. It will give me a contentment you do not dream of.”

“I do not quite understand you, Captain Maynard.”

“I shall be plain, then. Was it not you who sent your father to save me?”

It was a superfluous question, and he knew

it. How could he be ignorant of her action under the remembrance of those sweet words, "I'll come to you—I will come!"

She had not come, as he supposed; but she had done better. She had deputed one who had proved able to protect him.

"It is true," replied she. "I told papa of your trouble. It wasn't much for me. I had no danger; and must have shown myself very ungrateful had I not done so. You would have been saved without that. Your other friends would have been in time."

"My other friends?"

"Surely you know, sir?"

"Oh, you mean the American Minister?"

"And the two American ladies who went with him to your prison."

"Two ladies! I saw no ladies. I never heard of them. The American Minister came; but he might have been too late. It is to your father—to *you*—I am indebted for

my deliverance. I wish, Miss Vernon, you could understand how truly grateful I feel to you. I shall never be able to show it!"

Maynard spoke with a fervour he was unable to control.

It was not checked by any thought of the two ladies who had accompanied the American Minister to his Parisian prison. He had his surmises as to who they were; and there was a time when it would have gratified him. Now he was only glad to think that their friendly intent had been anticipated!

Standing in that wood, beside a bright creature worthy of being one of its nymphs, he was more contented to believe that she had been the preserver of his life—as he of hers.

It would have turned his contentment to supreme happiness, could he have believed her gratitude resembled his own—in kind.

Her soft young heart — how he yearned

to read it—to probe it to its profoundest depths!

It was a task delicate and dangerous; too delicate for a gentleman; too dangerous for one whose own heart was in doubt.

He feared to seek further.

“Miss Vernon,” he said, resuming the ordinary tone of discourse, “your cousin appears to have left you somewhat abruptly. May I have the pleasure of conducting you to the house? I think I can find the way after hearing Master Scudamore’s very particular directions.”

Master Scudamore! Had this young gentleman been present, he might have felt inclined to repudiate the juvenile appellation.

“Oh, no!” said the baronet’s daughter, scarce longer to be called a child. “I know the way well enough. You mustn’t leave your shooting, sir!”

“I cannot continue it; I have no dogs

The very zealous pair of sportsmen, to whom I was allotted, soon outstripped me, leaving me alone, as you see. If I am not permitted to accompany you, I must—I suppose—I must remain so.”

“Oh, if you’re not going to shoot, you may as well go with me. It may be very lonely for you at the house; but I suppose we’ll find some of the others who have returned.”

“Not lonely,” replied the recreant sportsman. “Not lonely for me, if you, Miss Vernon, will condescend to give me your company.”

Correctly interpreted, it was a bold speech; and the moment it was made, Maynard regretted it.

He was glad to perceive that it was taken only in the sense of politeness; and, the young girl consenting, he walked with her along the wood-road in the direction of the dwelling.

They were alone, but not unwatched.

Skulking behind them, with gun in hand, and spaniel at his heels, went young Scudamore. He did not attempt to overtake, but only watched them through the wood and along the park path, till they had joined a group of returned ladies, who chanced to be strolling through the lawn.

CHAPTER XXII.

JUST FIFTEEN.

IT was the birthday of Blanche Vernon. Partly in view of its celebration had Sir George called the shooting party together.

The morning had passed in the usual manner—shooting through the covers. In the evening there was to be a grand dinner—and after it a dance.

The evening hour had come; and the baronet's daughter was in her bedchamber, attended by Sabina, who had just finished dressing her for dinner.

But during the time of her toilet she had been occupied in the perusal of a newspaper,

that seemed greatly to interest her. Every now and then an exclamation escaped her lips, indicative of joy, until at length the journal dropped out of her hands; and she remained musing—as if in some thoughtful reverie.

It ended in her making the remark :

“ I fancy I’m in love.”

“ Law ! Missy Blanche, why you ’peak so ? You too young tink ’bout dat !”

“ Too young ! How old should one be ?”

“ Well. Dey do say it ’pend berry much on the nater ob de climate. In dem Wess Indy Island wha it ar hot, dey fall into de affecshun sooner dan hya in Englan. I know lots ob young Badian girl get married ’fore dey am fo’ten, an dey falls in lub sooner dan dat.”

“ But I’m fifteen this day. You know it’s my birthday ?”

“ Ob coas I know dat. Fifteen too young

for English girl; 'pecially a lady like you, Missy Blanche."

"You must remember I lived three years in the West Indies."

"No matter 'bout dat. It no diffrence make in 'spect ob de rule. In Englan you only chile yet."

"Only a child! Nonsense, Sabby! See how tall I am! That little bed's become quite too short for me. My toes touch the bottom of it every night. I must have it changed for a bigger one; I must."

"Don't signify 'bout you length."

"Well, I'm sure I'm stout enough. And such a weight! Papa had me weighed the other day at the railway station. Seven stone six pounds—over a hundred pounds. Think of that, Sabby!"

"I know you weighty for you age. But dat ain't de quessin when you talk 'bout gettin' married."

“Getting married. Ha! ha! ha! Who talks of that?”

“Dat what folks go in lub for. It am de natral consequence.”

“Not always, I think.”

“Wha dey am honest in dar lub.”

“Tell me, Sabby, have you ever been in love?”

“Sabby am a Wess Indy Creole; you no need ask de quessin. Why you ask it, Missa?”

“Because—because my cousin spoke to me about love, this morning, when we were in the covers.”

“Mass Frank? Law! he you speak ’bout lub! Wha’d he say, Missy Blanche?”

“He wanted me to promise I should love him, and be true to him.”

“If you him lub, you boun be true to him. Ob coas, you den marry him.”

“What! a boy like that! Marry cousin

Frank! Oh, no! When I get married, it must be to a man!"

"Berry clar you no him lub. Den may be dar am some'dy else?"

"You admit that you've been in love yourself, Sabby?" said her young mistress, without replying to the last remark.

"I admit dat, Missa. Sabby hab had de feelin' twict."

"Twice! That is strange, is it not?"

"Not in de Wess Indy Island."

"Well; no matter about the second time. If I should ever love twice, then I'd know all about it. Tell me, Sabby, how did it seem the first time? I suppose it's the same with you coloured people as with us whites?"

"Jess de same—only wif de Creole it am mo' so."

"More so! More what?"

"De Creole lub more 'trongly—more

burnin' in da passion. I feeled like I kud a ate dat fella up."

"What fellow?"

"De fust one. I wa'n't neer so mad atter de oder. I wa good bit older den."

"But you were never married, Sabina?"

"Nebba."

There was just a tinge of shadow on Sabina's brow, as she made this confession.

"Why you ask all dese quessins, Missy Blanche? You nogwine think fall in lub, nor get married?"

"I don't think of it, Sabby. I only fear that I *have* fallen in love. I fancy I have."

"Law! shoolly you know whetha you hab?"

"No, indeed. It's for that reason I wish you to tell me how it seemed to you."

"Well, I tole you it feel I kud eat de fella."

"Oh! that is very absurd. You must be

jesting, Sabby? I'm sure *I* don't feel that way."

"Den how, Missa?"

"Well; I should like him to be always with me, and nobody else near. And I should like him to be always talking to me; I listening and looking at him; especially into his eyes. He has such beautiful eyes. And they looked so beautiful to-day, when I met him in the wood! We were alone. It was the first time. How much pleasanter it was than to be among so many people. I wish papa's guests would all go away, and leave only him. Then we could be always together alone."

"Why, Missy Blanche, who you talk 'bout? Massa Cudamore?"

"No—no. Not cousin Frank. He might go with the rest. I don't care for his staying."

"Who den?"

“ Oh, Sabby, you know? You should know.”

“ Maybe Sabby hab a 'spicion. P'raps she no far 'stray to tink it am de gen'lum dat Missa 'company home from de shootin' cubbas.”

“ Yes; it is he. I'm not afraid to tell you, Sabby.”

“ You betta no tell nob'dy else. You fadder know dat, he awful angry. I'm satin shoo he go berry mad 'bout it.”

“ But why? Is there any harm in it?”

“ Ah, why! Maybe you find out in time. You betta gib you affecshun to you cousin Cudamore.”

“ Impossible to do that. I don't like him. I can't.”

“ An' you like de oder?”

“ Certainly I do. I can't help it. How could I?”

The Creole did not much wonder at this.

She belonged to a race of women wonderfully appreciative of the true qualities of men; and despite a little aversion at first, felt she had learned to like the 'publican captain. It was he of whom they were speaking.

"But, Missa, tell me de truth. You tink he like you?"

"I know not. I'd give a great deal to think so?"

"How much you gib?"

"All the world—if I had it. Oh, dear Sabby! do you believe he does?"

"Well; Sabby b'lieve he no hate you."

"Hate me! no—no. Surely he could not do that?"

"Surely not," was the reflection of the Creole, equally well-skilled in the qualities of women.

"How could he?" she thought, gazing upon her young mistress, with an eye that

recognized in her a type of all that may be deemed angelic.

“Well, Missy Blanche,” she said, without declaring her thoughts, “whetha he like you or no, take Sabby advice, an’ no tell any one you hab de likin’ for him. I satin shoo dat not greeable to you fadder. It breed trouble—big trouble. Keep dis ting to youself—buried down deep in you own buzzum. No fear Sabby ’tray you. No, Missy Blanche; she tink you dear good child. She tan by you troo de tick and thin—for ebba.”

“Thanks! dear Sabby! I know you will; I know it.”

“Das’ de dinna bell. Now you must go down to drawin’-room; and doan make dat ere cousin ob yours angry. I mean Massa Cudamore. Berry ’trange young buckra dat. Hab temper ob de debbil an’ de cunnin’ ob a sarpint. If he ’spect you tink ’bout de Capten Maynad, he big trouble wit you fadder breed,

shoo as snakes am snakes. So, Missy Blanche, you keep dark 'bout all dese tings, till de time come for confessin' dem."

Blanche, already dressed for dinner, descended to the drawing-room, but not before promising obedience to the injunction of her Creole *confidante*.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE DINNER.

THE dinner-party of that day was the largest Sir George had given. As already known, it was the fifteenth birthday of Blanche, his only child.

The guests intended to take seats at the table had been carefully selected. In addition to those staying at the Hall, there were others specially invited for the occasion—of course, the first families of the shire, who dwelt within dining distance.

In all, there were over twenty—several of them distinguished by titles—while twice as

many more were expected to drop in afterwards. A dance was to follow the dinner.

As Maynard, having made his toilet, descended to the drawing-room, he found it comfortably filled. Bevvies of beautiful women were seated upon the sofas, each in a wonderful abundance of skirt, and a still more surprising scantiness of bodice and sleeves.

Interspersed among them were the gentlemen, all in deep black, relieved only by the time-honoured white choker—their plain dresses contrasting oddly with the rich silks and satins that rustled around them.

Soon after entering the room, he became conscious of being under all eyes—both male and female: in short, their cynosure.

It was something beyond the mere customary glance given to a new guest on his announcement. As the butler in stentorian voice proclaimed his name, coupling it with his military title, a thrill appeared to pass

through the assemblage. The "swell" in tawny moustache, forsaking his habitual air of superciliousness, turned readily toward him; dowagers and duchesses, drawing out their gold-rimmed glasses, ogled him with a degree of interest unusual for these grand dames; while their daughters vouchsafed glances of a more speaking and pleasant nature.

Maynard did not know what to make of it. A stranger of somewhat peculiar antecedents, he might expect scrutiny.

But not of that concentrated kind—in a company reputed above all others for its good breeding.

He was himself too well-bred to be taken aback. Besides, he saw before him faces that appeared friendly; while the eyes of the discriminating dowagers, seen through their pebbles, instead of quizzing, seemed to regard him with admiration!

Though not disconcerted, he could not help

feeling surprised. Many of those present he had met before ; had hunted, shot, and even dined with them. Why should they be now receiving him with an interest not hitherto exhibited ?

The explanation was given by his host, who, approaching in a friendly manner, pronounced the words :

“ Captain Maynard, we congratulate you ? ”

“ On what, Sir George ? ” inquired the astonished guest.

“ Your literary success. We had already heard sir, of your skill in wielding the sword. We were not aware that you were equally skilful with another and like honourable weapon—the pen.”

“ You are very complimentary ; but I do not quite comprehend you.”

“ You will, by glancing at this. I presume, sir, you have not yet seen it—since it has just come down by the last post ? ”

As Sir George spoke, he held up a broad sheet, whose title proclaimed it the fashionable morning journal of London.

Maynard's eye was directed to a column, in large type, headed by his own name. Underneath was the review of a book—a novel he had written; but which, before his leaving London, had not received the usual notice from the newspaper press. The journal in question gave the first public announcement of its appearance and quality.

“Three extraordinary volumes, written by no every-day man. Of Captain Maynard it may be said what Byron wrote of Bonaparte:

“And quiet to quick bosoms is a hell.”

So commenced the review; and then ran on in the same strain of almost hyperbolic praise; the reviewer ending his remarks with the statement that “a new star had appeared in the literary firmament.”

The author did not read the long column of compliment paid by some generous pen—of course outside the literary clique—and entirely unknown to him. He only glanced at the opening paragraphs and conclusion, returning the paper to the hand of his host.

It would be untrue to say he was not pleased ; but equally so to declare that he was not also surprised. He had little thought, while recording some incidents of his life in a far foreign land—while blending them with emotions of a still later date, and moulding them into a romance—little had he dreamt that his *labour of love* was destined to give him a new kind of fame, and effect a complete change in his career. Hitherto he had thought only of the sword. It was to be laid aside for the pen.

“Dinner upon the table!” announced the butler, throwing wide open the drawing-room doors.

Sir George's guests paired off by introduction; the newly-discovered author finding himself bestowed upon a lady of title.

She was a young and interesting creature, the Lady Mary P——, daughter of one of the proudest peers in the realm.

But her escort cared little for this. He was thinking of that younger, and yet more interesting creature — the daughter of his host.

During the few minutes spent in the drawing-room, he had been watching her with ardent glances.

Almost snatching the fashionable journal from her father's hand, she had withdrawn to a retired corner, and there sat, with apparent eagerness, devouring its contents.

By the position of the sheet, he could tell the column on which she was engaged; and, as the light of the chandelier fell upon her face, he endeavoured to read its expression.

While writing that romance, he remembered with what tender emotions he had been thinking of her. Did she reciprocate those thoughts, now reading the review of it?

It was sweet to perceive a smile upon her countenance, as if the praise bestowed was giving her gratification. Sweeter still, when, the reading finished, she looked searchingly around the room, till her eyes rested upon him, with a proud, pleased expression!

A summons to the best dinner in the world was but a rude interruption to that adorable glance.

As he afterwards sat near the head of the dinner-table, with Lady Mary by his side, how he envied the more juvenile guests at the foot, especially young Scudamore, to whom had been allotted that bright, beautiful star, whose birth they were assembled to celebrate.

Maynard could no more see her. Between

them was a huge *epergne*, loaded with the spoils of the conservatory. How he detested its ferns and its flowers, the gardener who had gathered, and the hand that arranged them into such impenetrable festoons!

During the dinner he was inattentive to his titled companion — almost to impoliteness. Her pleasant speeches were scarce listened to, or answered incoherently. Even her ample silken skirts, insidiously rustling against his knees, failed to inspire him with the divinity of her presence!

Lady Mary had reason to believe in a doctrine oft propounded: that in social life men of genius are not only insipid, but stupid. No doubt she thought Maynard so; for it seemed a relief to her, as the dinner came to an end, and the ladies rose to betake themselves to the drawing-room.

Even with an ill grace did he draw back her chair: his eyes straying across the table,

where Blanche Vernon was filing past in the string of departing guests.

But a glance given by the latter, after clearing the *epergne*, more than repaid him for the frown upon Lady Mary's face, as she swept away from his side!

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE DANCE.

THE gentlemen staid but a short while over their wine. The twanging of harp-strings and tuning of violins, heard outside, told that their presence was required in the drawing-room—whither Sir George soon conducted them.

During the two hours spent at dinner, a staff of domestics had been busy in the drawing-room. The carpets had been taken up, and the floor waxed almost to an icy smoothness. The additional guests had arrived ; and were grouped over it, waiting for the music to begin.

There is no dance so delicious as that of the drawing-room—especially in an English country-house. There is a pleasant home-feeling about it, unknown to the crush of the public ball—be it “county” or “hunt.”

It is full of mystic imaginations—recalling Sir Roger de Coverley, and those dear olden times of supposed Arcadian innocence.

The dancers all know each other. If not, introductions are easily obtained, and there is no dread about making new acquaintances: since there is no danger in doing so.

Inside the room is an atmosphere you can breathe without thought of being stifled; outside a supper you can eat, and wines you may drink, without fear of being poisoned—adjuncts rarely found near the shrines of Terpsichore.

Maynard, though still a stranger to most of Sir George's guests, was made acquainted with as many of them as chanced in his way.

Those lately arrived, had also read the fashionable journal, or heard of its comments on the new romance soon to be sent them by "Mudie." And there is no circle in which genius meets with greater admiration than in that of the English aristocracy—especially when supposed to have been discovered in one of their own class.

Somewhat to his surprise, Maynard found himself the hero of the hour. He could not help feeling gratified by complimentary speeches that came from titled lips—many of them the noblest in the land. It was enough to make him contented. He might have reflected: how foolish he had been in embracing a political faith, at variance with that of all around him, and so long separating him from their pleasant companionship.

In the face of success in a far different field, this seemed for the time forgotten by them.

And by him, too: though without any intention of ever forsaking those republican principles he had adopted for his creed. His political leanings were not alone of choice, but conviction. He could not have changed them, if he would.

But there was no need to intrude them in that social circle; and, as he stood listening to praise from pretty lips, he felt contented—even to happiness.

That happiness reached its highest point, as he heard half-whispered in his ear the congratulatory speech:

“I’m so glad of your success!”

It came from a young girl with whom he was dancing in the quadrille of the Lancers, and who for the first time during the night had become his partner. It was Blanche Vernon.

“I fear you are flattering me!” was his reply. “At all events, the reviewer has done

so. The journal from which you've drawn your deduction is noted for its generosity to young authors—an exception to the general rule. It is to that I am indebted for what you, Miss Vernon, are pleased to term success. It is only the enthusiasm of my reviewer; perhaps interested in scenes that may be novel to him. Those described in my romance are of a land not much known, and still less written about."

"But they are very interesting!"

"How can you tell that?" asked Maynard, in surprise. "You have not read the book?"

"No; but the newspaper has given the story—a portion of it. I can judge from that."

The author had not been aware of this. He had only glanced at the literary notice—at its first and final paragraphs.

These had flattered him; but not so much

as the words now heard, and appearing truthfully spoken.

A thrill of delight ran through him, at the thought of those scenes having interested her. She had been in his thoughts all the while he was painting them. It was she who had inspired that portraiture of a "CHILD-WIFE," giving to the book any charm he supposed it to possess.

He was almost tempted to tell her so ; and might have done it, but for the danger of being overheard by the dancers.

"I am sure it is a very interesting story," said she, as they came together again after "turning to corners." "I shall continue to think so, till I've read the book ; and then you shall have my own opinion of it."

"I have no doubt you'll be disappointed. The story is one of rude frontier life, not likely to be interesting to young ladies."

“ But your reviewer does not say so. Quite the contrary. He describes it as full of very tender scenes.

“ I hope *you* may like them.”

“ Oh! I’m so anxious to read it!” continued the young girl, without appearing to notice the speech so pointedly addressed to her. “ I’m sure I shan’t sleep to-night, thinking about it!”

“ Miss Vernon; you know not how much I am gratified by the interest you take in my first literary effort. If,” added the author with a laugh, “ I could only think you would not be able to sleep the night after reading it, I might believe in the success which the newspaper speaks of.”

“ Perhaps it may be so. We shall soon see. Papa has already telegraphed Mr. Mudie for the book to be sent down, and we may expect it by the morning train. To-morrow night—if you’ve not made the story

a very long one—I promise you my judgment upon it.”

“The story is not long. I shall be impatient to hear what you think of it.”

And he was impatient. All next day while tramping through stubble and turnip-field in pursuit of partridges, and banging away at the birds, he had thoughts only of his book, and her he knew to be reading it!

CHAPTER XXV.

A JEALOUS COUSIN.

FRANK SCUDAMORE, of age about eighteen, was one of England's gilded youth.

Born with a silver spoon in his mouth, brought up amidst abundance of gold, with broad acres for his heritage, and a peerage in prospect, he was deemed a desirable companion for young girls, soon to become women and wives.

More than one match-making mother had his name upon her list of "eligibles."

It soon became evident that these ladies would be under the necessity of "scratching" him; inasmuch as the prospective peer had

fixed his affections upon one who was motherless—Blanche Vernon.

He had passed enough time at Vernon Park to become acquainted with the rare qualities of his cousin. As a boy he had loved her ; as a youth he adored her.

It had never occurred to him that anything should come between him and his hopes, or rather his desires. Why should he talk about hopes : since the experience of his whole life taught him that to wish was to obtain ?

He wished for Blanche Vernon ; and had no fear about obtaining her. He did not even think it necessary to make an effort to win her. He knew that his father, Lord Scudamore, looked forward to the alliance ; and that her father was equally favourable to it. There could be no opposition from any quarter, and he only waited till his young sweetheart should be ready to become a wife,

that he might propose to her, and be accepted.

He did not think of his own youthfulness. At eighteen he believed himself a man.

Hitherto he had been but little troubled with competitors. It is true that others of the *jeunesse dorée* had looked at, and talked of the beautiful Blanche Vernon.

But Frank Scudamore, endowed with extraordinary claims, as favoured by chances, had little to fear from their rivalry : and one after another, on shedding their evanescent light, had disappeared from his path.

At length came that black shadow across it ; in the person of a man, old enough, as he had spitefully said, to be Blanche Vernon's father ! The grandfather was an expression of hyperbole.

This man was Maynard.

Scudamore, while visiting at Vernon Park, had heard a good deal said in praise of the

adventurous stranger; too much to make it possible he should ever take a liking to him—especially as the praise had proceeded from the lips of his pretty cousin. He had met Maynard for the first time at the shooting party, and his anticipated dislike was realized, if not reciprocated.

It was the most intense of antipathies—that of jealousy.

It had shown itself at the hunting meet, in the pheasant preserves, in the archery grounds, in the house at home—in short everywhere.

As already known, he had followed his cousin along the wood-path. He had watched every movement made by her while in the company of her strange escort—angry at himself for having so carelessly abandoned her. He had not heard the conversation passing between them; but saw enough to satisfy him, that it savoured of more than a common confidence. He had been smarting with

jealousy all the rest of that day, and all the next, which was her birthday; jealous at dinner, as he observed her eyes making vain endeavours to pierce the *epergne* of flowers; madly jealous in the dance—especially at that time when the “Lancers” were on the floor, and she stood partner to the man “old enough to be her father.”

Notwithstanding the noble blood in his veins, Scudamore was mean enough to keep close to them, and listen!

And he heard some of the speeches, half-compromising, that had passed between them.

Stung to desperation, he determined to report them to his uncle.

On the day following his daughter's birthday, Sir George did not accompany his guests to the field. He excused himself, on the plea that diplomatic business required him to confine himself to his library. He was sincere: for such was in reality the case.

His daughter also staid at home. As expected, the new novel had come down—an uncut copy, fresh from the hands of the binder.

Blanche had seized upon it; and gaily bidding every one good-bye, had hurried off to her own apartment, to remain immured for the day!

With joy Maynard saw this, as he sallied forth along with the shooting party. Scudamore, staying at home, beheld it with bitter chagrin.

Each had his own thoughts, as to the effect the perusal of the book might produce.

It was near mid-day, and the diplomatic baronet was seated in his library, preparing to answer a dispatch freshly received from the Foreign Office, when he was somewhat abruptly intruded upon. His nephew was the intruder.

Intimate as though he were a son, and some

day to be his son-in-law, young Scudamore required to make no excuse for the intrusion.

“What is it, Frank?” was the inquiry of the diplomatist, holding the dispatch to one side.

“It’s about Blanche,” bluntly commenced the nephew.

“Blanche! what about her?”

“I can’t say that it’s much my business, uncle; except out of respect for our family. She’s your daughter; but she’s also my cousin.”

Sir George let the dispatch fall flat upon the table; readjusted the spectacles upon his nose; and fixed upon his nephew a look of earnest inquiry.

“What is this you’re talking of, my lad?” he asked, after a period passed in scrutinizing the countenance of young Scudamore.

“I’m almost ashamed to tell you, uncle.

Something you might have seen as easily as I."

"But I haven't. What is it?"

"Well; you've admitted a man into your house who don't appear to be a gentleman."

"What man?"

"This Captain Maynard, as you call him."

"Captain Maynard not a gentleman! What grounds have you for saying so? Be cautious, nephew. It's a serious charge against any guest in my house—more especially one who is a stranger. I have good reasons for thinking he *is* a gentleman."

"Dear uncle; I should be sorry to differ from you, if I hadn't good reasons for thinking *he is not*."

"Let me hear them?"

"Well; in the first place, I was with cousin Blanche in the covers, day before yesterday. It was when we all went pheasant-shooting. We separated; she going home,

and I to continue the sport. I had got out of sight, as he supposed, when this Mr. Maynard popped out from behind a holly copse, and joined her. I'm positive he was there waiting for the opportunity. He gave up his shooting, and accompanied her home; talking all the way, with as much familiarity as if he had been her brother!"

"He has the right, Frank Scudamore. He saved my child's life."

"But that don't give him the right to say the things he said to her."

Sir George started.

"What things?"

"Well; a good many. I don't mean in the covers. What passed between them there, of course, I couldn't hear. I was too far off. It was last night, while they were dancing, I heard them."

"And what did you hear?"

"They were talking about this new book

Mr. Maynard has written. My cousin said she was so anxious to read it she would not be able to sleep that night. In reply, he expressed a hope she would feel the same way the night after reading it. Uncle, is that the sort of speech for a stranger to address to cousin Blanche? Or for her to listen to?"

The question was superfluous; and Scudamore saw it, by the abrupt manner in which the spectacles were jerked from Sir George's nose.

"You heard all that, did you?" he asked, almost mechanically.

"Every word of it."

"Between my daughter and Captain Maynard?"

"I have said so, uncle."

"Then say it to no one else. Keep it to yourself, Frank, till I speak to you again. Go now! I've Government business to attend to, that requires all my time. Go!"

The nephew, thus authoritatively dismissed, retired from the library.

As soon as he was outside the door, the baronet sprang up out of his chair; and, striding excitedly around the room, exclaimed to himself:

“ This comes of showing kindness to a republican—a traitor to his Queen !”

CHAPTER XXVI.

UNDER THE DEODARA.

THE birthday of Blanche Vernon did not terminate the festivities at her father's house.

On the second day after, there was a dinner party of like splendid appointment, succeeded by dancing.

It was the season of English rural enjoyment, when crops have been garnered, and rents paid ; when the farmer rests from his toil, and the squire luxuriates in his sports.

Again in Vernon Hall were noble guests assembled ; and again the inspiring strains of

harp and violin told time to the fantastic gliding of feet.

And again Maynard danced with the baronet's daughter.

She was young to take part in such entertainments. But it was in her father's house, and she was an only daughter—hence almost necessitated at such early age to play mistress of the mansion.

True to her promise, she had read the romance and declared her opinion of it to the anxious author.

She liked it, though not enthusiastically. She did not say this. Only from her manner could Maynard tell there was a qualification. Something in the book seemed not to have satisfied her. He could not conjecture what it was. He was too disappointed to press for an explanation.

Once more they were dancing together, this time in a *valse*. Country-bred, as she was,

she waltzed like a *coryphée*. She had taken lessons from a Creole teacher, while resident on the other side of the Atlantic.

Maynard was himself no mean dancer, and she was just the sort of partner to delight him.

Without thought of harm, in the *abandon* of girlish innocence, she rested her cheek upon his shoulder, and went spinning round with him—in each whirl weaving closer the spell upon his heart.

And without thought of being observed.

But she was. At every turn, all through the room, both she and he. Dowagers, seated along the sides, ogled them through their eye-glasses, shook their false curls, and made muttered remarks. Young ladies, two seasons out, looked envious; Lady Mary contemptuous, almost scowling.

“The gilded youth” did not like it; least of all Scudamore, who strode through the

room sulky and savage, or stood watching the sweep of his cousin's skirt, as though he could have torn the dress from her back!

It was no relief to him when the *valse* came to an end.

On the contrary, it but increased his torture; since the couple he was so jealously observing walked off, arm-in-arm, through the conservatory, and out into the grounds.

There was nothing strange in their doing so. The night was warm, and the doors both of conservatory and drawing-room set wide open. They were but following a fashion. Several other couples had done the same.

Whatever may be said of England's aristocracy, they have not yet reached that point of corruption, to make appearances suspicious. They may still point with pride to one of the noblest of their national mottoes:—"Honi soit qui mal y pense."

It is true they are in danger of forsaking it;

under that baleful French influence, felt from the other side of the Channel, and now extending to the uttermost ends of the earth—even across the Atlantic.

But it is not gone yet; and a guest admitted into the house of an English gentleman is not presupposed to be an adventurer, stranger though he be. His strolling out through the grounds, with a young lady for sole companion, even upon a starless night, is not considered *outré*—certainly not a thing for scandal.

Sir George Vernon's guest, with Sir George's daughter on his arm, was not thinking of scandal, as they threaded the mazes of the shrubbery that grew contiguous to the dwelling. No more, as they stopped under the shadow of gigantic *deodara*, whose broad ever-green fronds extended far over the carefully kept turf.

Their was neither moon or stars in the

sky ; no light, save that dimly reflected through the glass panelling of the conservatory.

They were alone, or appeared so—secure from being either observed, or overheard, as if standing amidst the depths of some primeval forest, or the centre of an unpeopled desert. If there were others near, they were not seen ; if speaking, it must have been in whispers.

Perhaps this feeling of security gave a tone to their conversation. At all events, it was carried on with a freedom from restraint, hitherto unused between them.

“ You have travelled a great deal ? ” said the young girl, as the two came to a stand under the *deodara*.

“ Not much more than yourself, Miss Vernon. You have been a great traveller, if I mistake not ? ”

“ I ! oh, no ! I’ve only been to one of the

West India islands, where papa was Governor. Then to New York, on our way home. Since to some of the capital cities of Europe. That's all."

"A very fair itinerary for one of your age."

"But you, sir, you have visited many strange lands, and passed through strange scenes—scenes of danger, as I've been told."

"Who told you that?"

"I've read it. I'm not so young as to be denied reading the newspapers. They've spoken of you, and your deeds. Even had we never met, I should have known your name."

And had they never met, Maynard would not have had such happiness as was his at that moment. This was his reflection.

"My deeds, as you please to designate them, Miss Vernon, have been but ordinary incidents; such as fall to the lot of all who travel through countries still in a state of nature, and where the passions of men are

uncontrolled by the restraints of civilized life. Such a country is that lying in the midst of the American continent—the *prairies*, as they are termed.”

“Oh! the prairies! Those grand meadows of green, and fields of flowers! How I should like to visit them!”

“It would not be altogether a safe thing for you to do.”

“I know that; since you, sir, have encountered such dangers upon them. How well you have described them in your book! I liked that part very much. It read delightfully.”

“But not all the book?”

“Yes; it is all very interesting; but some parts of the story——”

“Did not please you,” said the author, giving help to the hesitating critic. “May I ask what portions have the ill-luck to deserve your condemnation?”

The young girl was for a moment silent, as if embarrassed by the question.

“Well,” she at length responded, a topic occurring to relieve her. “I did not like to think that white men made war upon the poor Indians, just to take their scalps and sell them for money. It seems such an atrocity. Perhaps, sir, the story is not *all* true? May I hope it is not?”

It was a strange question to put to an author, and Maynard thought so. He remarked also that the tone was strange.

“Well, not all,” was his reply. “Of course the book is put forth as a romance; though some of the scenes described in it were of actual occurrence. I grieve to say, those which have given you dissatisfaction. For the leader of the sanguinary expedition, of which it is an account, there is much to be said in palliation of what may be called his crimes. He had suffered terribly at the hands of

the savages. With him the motive was not gain, not even retaliation. He gave up warring against the Indians, after recovering his daughter—so long held captive among them.”

“And his other daughter—Zöe—she who was in love—and so young too. Much younger than I am. Tell me, sir, is also that true?”

Why was this question put? And why a tremor in the tone, that told of an interest stronger than curiosity?

Maynard was in turn embarrassed, and scarce knew what answer to make. There was joy in his heart, as he mentally interpreted her meaning.

He thought of making a confession, and telling her the whole truth.

But had the time come for it?

He reflected “not,” and continued to dissemble.

“Romance writers,” he at length responded,

“are allowed the privilege of creating imaginary characters. Otherwise they would not be writers of romance. These characters are sometimes drawn from real originals—not necessarily those who may have figured in the actual scenes described—but who have at some time, and elsewhere, made an impression upon the mind of the writer.”

“And Zöe was one of these?”

Still a touch of sadness in the tone. How sweet to the ears of him so interrogated!

“She was, and is.”

“She is still living?”

“Still!”

“Of course. Why should I have thought otherwise? And she must yet be young?”

“Just fifteen years—almost to a day.”

“Indeed! what a singular coincidence! You know it is my age?”

“Miss Vernon, there are many coincidences stranger than that.”

“ Ah ! true ; but I could not help thinking of it. Could I ? ”

“ Oh, certainly not—after such a happy birthday.”

“ It was happy—indeed it was. I have not been so happy since.”

“ I hope the reading of my story has not saddened you ? If I thought so, I should regret ever having written it.”

“ Thanks ! thanks ! ” responded the young girl ; “ it is very good of you to say so.”

And after the speech, she remained silent and thoughtful.

“ But you tell me it is not all true ? ” she resumed after a pause. “ What part is not ? You say that Zœe is a real character ? ”

“ She is. Perhaps the only one in the book true to nature. I can answer for the faithfulness of the portrait. She was in my soul while I was painting it.”

“ Oh ! ” exclaimed his companion, with a

half suppressed sigh. "It must have been so. I'm sure it must. Otherwise how could you have told so truly how she would feel? I was of her age, and I know it!"

Maynard listened with delight. Never sounded rhapsody sweeter in the ears of an author.

The baronet's daughter seemed to recover herself. It may have been pride of position, or the stronger instinct of love still hoping.

"Zöe," she said. "It is a very beautiful name—very singular! I have no right to ask you, but I cannot restrain my curiosity. Is it her real name?"

"It is not. And you are the only one in the world who has the right to know what that is."

"I! For what reason?"

"Because it is *yours*!" answered he, no longer able to withhold the truth. "Yours!"

Yes ; the Zœe of my romance is but the portrait of a beautiful child, first seen upon a Cunard steamer. Since grown to be a girl still more attractively beautiful. And since thought of by him who saw her, till the thought became a passion that must seek expression in words. It sought ; and has found it. Zœe is the result—the portrait of Blanche Vernon, painted by one who loves, who would be willing to die for her !”

At this impassioned speech, the baronet’s daughter trembled. But not as in fear. On the contrary, it was joy that was stirring within her heart.

And this heart was too young, and too guileless, either to conceal or be ashamed of its emotions.

There was no show of concealment in the quick ardent interrogatories that followed.

“ Captain Maynard, is this true ? Or have you spoken but to flatter me ?”

“True!” replied he, in the same impassioned tone. “It is true! From the hour when I first saw you, you have never been out of my mind. You never will. It may be folly—madness—but I can never cease thinking of you.”

“Nor I of you!”

“Oh, heavens! can this be so? Is my presentiment to be fulfilled? Blanche Vernon! do you love me?”

“*A strange question to put to a child!*”

The remark was made by one, who had hitherto had no share in the conversation. Maynard’s blood ran cold, as, under the shadow of the deodara, he recognized the tall figure of Sir George Vernon!

* * * * *

It was not yet twelve o’clock. There was still time for Captain Maynard to catch the night mail; and by it he returned to London.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE ILLUSTRIOUS EXILE.

THE revolutionary era had ended ; tranquillity was restored ; and peace reigned throughout Europe.

But it was a peace secured by chains, an supported by bayonets.

Manin was dead, Hecker an exile in Transatlantic lands, Blum had been murdered—as also a score of other distinguished revolutionary leaders.

But there were two still surviving, whose names caused uneasiness to despotism from the Baltic to the Mediterranean—from the Euxine to the Atlantic.

These names were Kossuth and Mazzini.

Despite the influence used to blacken them—the whole power of a corrupted press—they were still sounds of magical import; symbols that at any day might stir up the peoples to strike one other blow for freedom. More especially was this true of Kossuth. Some rashness shown by Mazzini—a belief that his doctrines were too *red*—in other words, too far advanced for the time—stinted the confidence of the more moderate in the liberal party.

It was otherwise with the views of Kossuth. These had all along been strictly in accordance with conservatism—aiming only at national independence upon a presumed republican basis. Of the *république rouge et démocratique* talked of in France, he had never given assent to the *rouge*, and but partially to the *démocratique*.

If the future historian can ever find flaw in

the character of Kossuth, it will be in the fact of his having been too conservative ; or rather too national, and not enough developed in the idea of a universal propagandism.

Too much was he, as unfortunately most men are, a believer in non-interference ; that sophism of international comity which permits the King of Dahomey to kill his subjects to his heart's content, and the King of Viti-Vau to eat *his*, to the satisfaction of his stomach.

This limitation in the principles of the Magyar chief was the only thing in his character, known to the writer, that will exclude him from being considered truly, grandly great.

It may have been only assumed—it is to be hoped so—to contribute to the success of his noble purposes.

It certainly tended to this—by securing him the confidence of the more timid adherents of the revolutionary cause.

But there was another influence in his favour ; and against the triumphant despots. All knew that the failure of the Hungarian revolution was due to causes over which Kossuth had no control—in short, to the blackest treachery on record. That with unerring genius, and all his soul's energy, he had protested against the courses that led to it ; and, to the last hour, had held out against the counsels of the wavering and the wicked. Not by his own consent, but by force, had he succumbed to them.

It was the knowledge of this that lent that magical influence to his name—every day growing stronger, as the story of Geörgei's treason became better understood.

Expelled from his own land, he had sought an asylum in England.

Having gone through the *fanfaron* of a national welcome, in the shape of cheap receptions and monster meetings — having

passed the entire ordeal, without succumbing to flattery, or giving his enemies the slightest cue for ridicule—this singular man had settled down in a modest suburban residence in the western district of London.

There in the bosom of his beloved family—a wife and daughter, with two sons, noble youths, who will yet add lustre to the name—he seemed only desirous of escaping from that noisy hospitality, by this time known to him to be nothing but the emptiest ostentation.

A few public dinners, cooked by such coarse caterers as the landlords of the London or Freemasons' Tavern, were all of English cheer Kossuth ever tasted, and all he cared to claim. In his home he was not only permitted to purchase everything out of his own sadly attenuated purse, but was cheated by almost every tradesman with whom he had to deal; and beyond the ordinary extortion on the strength of his being a stranger!

This was the sort of hospitality extended by England to the illustrious exile; and of which her Tory press have made so much boast!

But that press has not told us how he was encompassed by British spies—by French ones also, in British pay—watched in his outgoings and incomings—tracked in his daily walks—his friends as well—and under constant incitement through secret agencies to do something that would commit him, and give a colourable chance for bringing his career to a close!

The outside world believed it had come to this; that the power of the great revolutionist was broken for ever, and his influence at an end.

But the despots knew better. They knew that as long as Kossuth lived, with character unattainted, scarce a king in Europe that did not need to sit trembling on his throne.

Even England's model queen, or rather the German prince who then controlled the destinies of the English nation, understood the influence that attached to Kossuth's name, whilst the latter was among the most active of those secret agents who were endeavouring to destroy it.

The hostility of the royal family of England to the ex-dictator of Hungary is easily understood. It had a double source of inspiration: fear of the republican form, and a natural leaning to the alliance of kinship. The crowns of Austria and England are closely united in the liens of a blood-relationship. In the success of Kossuth would be the ruin of cousins-german and German cousins.

It was then the interest of all crowned heads to effect his ruin—if not in body, at least in reputation. His fame, coupled with a spotless character, shielded him from the ordinary dangers of the outlaw. The world's

public opinion stood in the way of their taking his life, or even consigning him to a prison.

But there was still the chance of rendering him innocuous—by blasting his reputation, and so depriving him of the sympathy that had hitherto upheld him.

For this purpose the press was employed; and notoriously the leading journal: that instrument ever ready—at a price—for purposes of oppression.

Openly and secretly it assailed him, by base accusations, and baser insinuations.

He was defended by a young writer, who had but lately made his appearance in the world of London, becoming known through the achievement of a literary triumph. And so successfully defended, that the Kossuth slanders, like curses, came back into the teeth of those who had uttered them.

In its long career of tergiversation, never

had this noted newspaper been driven into such a position of shame. There was a whole day, during which it was chaffed on the Stock Exchange, and laughed at in the London clubs.

It has not forgotten that day of humiliation; and often has it given its antagonist cause to remember it. It has since taken ample revenge—by using its immense power to blast his literary reputation.

He thought not of this while writing those letters in defence of freedom and justice. Nor did he care, so long as this object might be attained.

It was attained. The character of the great Magyar came out stainless and triumphant—to the chagrin of suborned scribblers, and the despots who had suborned them.

Cleared in the eyes of the “nationalities,” Kossuth was still dangerous to the crowns of Europe—now more than ever.

The press had failed to befoul him. Other means must be employed to bring about his destruction.

And other means were employed. A plot was conceived to deprive him, not alone of his reputation, but his life. An atrocity so incredible, that in giving an account of it I can scarce expect to be believed!

It is nevertheless true.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A KINGLY SCHEME OF REVOLUTION.

ONCE more met the conclave of crowned heads, by their representatives; no longer in the palace of the Tuileries, but in the mansion of an English nobleman.

This time the ex-dictator of Hungary was the subject of their deliberations.

“So long as *he* lives,” said the commissioner of that crown most nearly concerned, “so long will there be danger to our empire. A week, a day, a single hour, may witness its dissolution; and you know, gentlemen, what must follow from that!”

It was an Austrian field-marshal who thus spoke.

“From that would follow an emperor without a crown—perhaps without a head!”

The rejoinder came from the joking gentleman who was master of the mansion, in which the conspirators were assembled.

“But is it really so serious?” asked the Russian grand-duke. “Do you not much overrate the influence of this man?”

“Not any, altesse. We have taken pains to make ourselves acquainted with it. Our emissaries, sent throughout Hungary, report that there is scarce a house in the land where prayers are not nightly put up for him. By grand couch and cottage-bed the child is taught to speak the name of Kossuth more fervently than that of Christ—trained to look to him as its future saviour. What can come of this but another rising—a revolution that may spread to every kingdom in Europe?”

“Do you include the empires?” asked the facetious Englishman, glancing significantly toward the grand-duke.

“Ay do I. And the islands, too,” retorted the field-marshal.

The Russian grinned. The Prussian diplomatist looked incredulous. Not so the representative of France ; who, in a short speech, acknowledged the danger. To his master a European revolution would have been fatal, as to himself.

And yet it was he, whose country had least to fear from it, who suggested the vile plan for its avoidance. It came from the representative of England !

“You think Kossuth is your chief danger ?” he said, addressing himself to the Austrian.

“We know it. We don’t care for Mazzini, with his wild schemes on the Italian side. The people there begin to think him mad. Our danger lies upon the Danube.”

“And your safety can only be secured by action on the south side of the Alps.”

“How? In what way? By what action?” were questions simultaneously put by the several conspirators.

“Explain yourself, my lord,” said the Austrian, appealingly.

“Bah! It’s the simplest thing in the world. You want the Hungarian in your power. The Italian, you say, you don’t care for. But you may as well, while you’re about it, catch both, and half a score of other smaller fish—all of whom you can easily get into your net.”

“They are all here! Do you intend giving them up?”

“Ha—ha—ha!” laughed the light-hearted lord. “You forget you’re in free England! To do that would be indeed a danger. No—no. We islanders are not so imprudent. There are other ways to dispose of these

troublesome strangers, without making open surrender of them."

"Other ways! Name them! Name one of them!"

The demand came from his fellow-conspirators—all speaking in a breath.

"Well; one way seems easy enough. There's a talk of trouble in Milan. Your white coats are not popular in that Italian metropolis, field-marshal? So my despatches tell me."

"What of that, my lord? We have a strong garrison at Milan. Plenty of Bohemians, with our ever faithful Tyrolese. It is true there are several Hungarian regiments there."

"Just so. And in these lies the chance of the revolutionary leaders. Your chance, if you skilfully turn it to account."

"How skilfully?"

"Mazzini is tampering with them. So I

understand it. Mazzini is a madman. Therefore let him go on with his game. Encourage him. Let him draw Kossuth into the scheme. The Magyar will be sure to take the bait, if you but set it as it should be. Send mutinous men among these Hungarian regiments. Throw out a hope of their being able to raise a revolt—by joining the Italian people. It will lure, not only Mazzini and Kossuth, but along with them the whole fraternity of revolutionary firebrands. Once in *your* net, you should know how to deal with such fish, without any suggestion from me. They are too strong for any meshes we dare weave around them here. Gentlemen, I hope you understand me?"

"Perfectly!" responded all.

"A splendid idea!" added the representative from France. "It would be a *coup* worthy of the genius who has conceived it. Field-marshal, you will act upon this?"

A superfluous question. The Austrian deputy was but too happy to carry back to his master a suggestion, to which he knew he would gladly give his consent; and after another half hour spent in talking over its details, the conspirators separated.

“It *is* an original idea!” soliloquized the Englishman, as he sate smoking his cigar after the departure of his guests. “A splendid idea, as my French friend has characterized it. I shall have my *revanche* against this proud refugee for the slight he has put upon me in the eyes of the English people. Ah! Monsieur Kossuth! if I foresee aright, your revolutionary aspirations will soon come to an end. Yes, my noble demagogue! your days of being dangerous are as good as numbered!”

CHAPTER XXIX.

A DESIRABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD.

LYING west of the Regent's Park, and separated from it by Park Road, is a tract of land sparsely studded with those genteel cottages which the Londoner delights to invest with the more aristocratic appellation of "villas."

Each stands in its own grounds of a quarter to half an acre, embowered in a shrubbery of lilacs, laburnums, and laurels.

They are of all styles of architecture known to ancient or modern times. And of all sizes; though the biggest of them, in real

estate value, is not worth the tenth part of the ground it occupies.

From this it may be inferred that they are leaseholds, soon to lapse to the fee-simple owner of the soil.

The same will explain their generally dilapidated condition, and the neglect observable about their grounds.

It was different a few years ago; when their leases had some time to run, and it was worth while keeping them in repair. Then, if not fashionable, they were at least “desirable residences;” and a villa in St. John’s Wood (the name of the neighbourhood) was the ambition of a retired tradesman. There he could have his grounds, his shrubbery, his walks, and even six feet of a fish-pond. There he could sit in the open air, in tasselled robe and smoking-cap, or stroll about amidst a Pantheon of Plaster-of-Paris statues—imagining himself a Mæcenas.

Indeed, so classic in their ideas have been the residents of this district, that one of its chief thoroughfares is called Alpha Road; another, Omega Terrace.

St. John's Wood was, and still is, a favourite place of abode for "professionals"—for the artist, the actor, and the second-class author. The rents are moderate—the villas, most of them, being small.

Unfortunately it is equally noted as a neighbourhood of the *demi-monde*. Of late years more than ever; until it has become quite overrun by these Paphian nymphs who by the invasion of its sylvan scenery have driven the retired tradesman from the contemplation of his statues.

Shorn of its tranquil pleasures, the villa district of St. John's Wood will soon disappear from the chart of London. Already encompassed by close-built streets, it will itself soon be covered by compact blocks of

dwellings, rendering the family of " Eyre " one of the richest in the land.

Annually the leases are lapsing, and piles of building bricks begin to appear in grounds once verdant with close-cut lawn grass, and copped with roses and rhododendrons.

Through this quarter runs the Regent's Canal, its banks on both sides rising high above the water level, in consequence of a swell in the ground that required a cutting. It passes under Park Road, into the Regent's Park, and through this eastward to the City.

In its traverse of the St. John's Wood district, its sides are occupied by a double string of dwellings, respectively called North and South Bank, each fronted by another row with a lamp-lit road running between.

They are varied in style; many of them of picturesque appearance, and all more or less embowered in shrubbery.

Those bordering on the canal have gardens sloping down to the water's edge, and quite private on the side opposite to the tow-path—which is the southern.

Ornamental evergreens, with trees of the weeping kind, drooping over the water, render these back-gardens exceedingly attractive. Standing upon the bridge in Park Road, and looking west up the canal vista, you could scarce believe yourself to be in the city of London, and surrounded by closely packed buildings extending more than a mile beyond.

* * * * *

In one of the South Bank villas, with grounds running back to the canal, dwelt a Scotchman—of the name M'Tavish.

He was but a second-class clerk in a city banking-house; but being a Scotchman, he might count upon one day becoming chief of the concern.

Perhaps with some foreshadowing of such a fortune, he had leased the villa in question, and furnished it to the extent of his means.

It was one of the prettiest in the string—quite good enough for a joint-stock banker to live in, or die in. M'Tavish had determined to do the former; and the latter, if the event should occur within the limits of his lease, which extended to twenty-one years.

The Scotchman, prudent in other respects, had been rash in the selection of his residence. He had not been three days in occupation, when he discovered that a notorious courtesan lived on his right, another of less celebrity on his left, while the house directly fronting him, on the opposite side of the road, was occupied by a famed revolutionary leader, and frequented by political refugees from all parts of the disturbed world.

M'Tavish was dismayed. He had subscribed to a twenty-one years' lease, at a full

rack-rental ; for he had acted under conjugal authority in taking the place.

Had he been a bachelor the thing might have signified less. But he was a Benedict : with daughters nearly grown up. Besides he was a Presbyterian of the strictest sect—his wife being still tighter laced than himself. Both, moreover, were loyalists of the truest type.

His morality made the proximity of his right and left hand neighbours simply intolerable—while his politics rendered equally a nuisance the revolutionary focus in his front.

There seemed no escape from the dilemma, but to make sacrifice of his dearly-bought premises, or drown himself in the canal that bordered them at the back.

As the drowning would not have benefited Mrs. M'Tavish, she persuaded him against this idea, and in favour of selling the lease.

Alas ! for the imprudent bank clerk, no-

body could be found to buy it—unless at such a reduced rate, as would have ruined him.

He was a Scotchman, and could not stand this. Far better to stick to the house.

And for a time he stuck to it.

But the proximity of the two courtezans, with their numerous following of male and female friends, often conspicuous over the frail fence; the echoes of their nocturnal saturnalia interfering with his family prayers; and the effect which bad example might produce on the morals of his children, soon drove M'Tavish half mad, and his wife more than half frantic.

There seemed no escape from it, but by sacrificing the lease. It was a tooth-drawing alternative; but could not be avoided.

As the husband and wife were discussing the question, canvassing it in every shape, they were interrupted by a ring at the gate bell. It was the evening hour; when the

bank clerk having returned from the city, was playing *paterfamilias* in the bosom of his family.

Who could be calling at that hour? It was too late for a ceremonial visit. Perhaps some unceremonious acquaintance from the Land of Cakes, dropping in for a pipe, and a glass of whisky-toddy?

“There’s yin ootside weeshes to see ye, maister.”

This was said by a rough-skinned damsel—the “maid-of-all-work”—who had shown her freckled face inside the parlour door, and whose patois proclaimed her to have come from the same country as M’Tavish himself.

“Wishes to see me! Who is it, Maggie?”

“Dinna ken who. It’s a rank stranger—a quare-lookin’ callant, wi’ big beard, and them sort o’ whiskers they ca’ moostachoes. I made free to ax him his bisness. He sayed ’twas aboot taakin’ the hoos.”

“About taking the house?”

“Yis, maister. He sayed he’d heared o’ its bein to let.”

“Show him in!”

M‘Tavish sprang to his feet, overturning the chair on which he had been seated. Mrs. M., and her trio of flaxen-haired daughters, scuttled off into the back parlour—as if a tiger was about to be uncaged in the front one.

They were not so frightened, however, as to hinder them from, in turns, flattening their noses against a panel of the partition-door, and scrutinizing the stranger through the keyhole.

“How handsome he is!” exclaimed Elspie, the eldest of the girls.

“Quite a military-looking man!” said the second, Jane, after having completed her scrutiny. “I wonder if he’s married?”

“Come away from there, children!” mut-

tered the mother. "He may hear you, and your papa will be very angry. Come away, I tell you!"

The girls slunk back from the door, and took seats upon a sofa.

But their mother's curiosity had also to be appeased; and with an example that corresponded ill with her precept, she dropped down upon her knees, and first placing her eye, and afterward her ear, to the keyhole, listened to every word spoken between her husband and his strange visitor with the "whiskers called moostachoes!"

CHAPTER XXX.

A TENANT SECURED.

THE visitor thus introduced to the South Bank villa was a man of about thirty years of age, with the air and demeanour of a gentleman.

The City clerk could tell him to be of the West End type. It was visible in the cut of his dress, the tonsure of his hair, and the joining of the moustache to his whiskers.

“ Mr. M‘Tavish, I presume ? ” were the words that came from him, as he passed through the parlour door.

The Scotchman nodded assent. Before he could do more, the stranger continued :

“ Pardon me, sir, for this seeming intrusion. I’ve heard that your house is to let.”

“ Not exactly to *let*. I’m offering it for sale—that is the lease.”

“ I’ve been misinformed then. How long has the lease to run, may I ask ?”

“ Twenty-one years.”

“ Ah! that will not suit me. I wanted a house only for a short time. I’ve taken a fancy to this South Bank—at least my wife has ; and you know, sir—I presume you’re a married man—that’s everything.”

M‘Tavish did know it, to a terrible certainty ; and gave an assenting smile.

“ I’m sorry,” pursued the stranger. “ I like the house better than any on the Bank. I know my wife would be charmed with it.”

“ It’s the same with mine,” said M‘Tavish.

“ How you lie!” thought Mrs. Mac, with her ear at the keyhole.

“ In that case, I presume there’s no chance of our coming to terms. I should have been glad to take it by the year—for one year, certain—and at a good rent.”

“ How much would you be inclined to give ?” asked the lessee, bethinking him of a compromise.

“ Well ; I scarcely know. How much do you ask.”

“ Furnished, or unfurnished ?”

“ I’d prefer having it furnished ?”

The bank clerk commenced beating his brains. He thought of his Penates, and the objection his wife might have to parting with them. But he thought also, of how they had been daily dishonoured in that unhallowed precinct—by the proximity of the two courtezans.

Even while reflecting, a pean of spasmodic revelry, heard on the other side of the palings, sounded suggestive in his ears ?

It decided him to concede the furniture; and on terms less exacting, than he might otherwise have asked for.

“For a year certain, you say?”

“I’ll take it for a year; and pay in advance, if you desire it.”

A year’s rent in advance is always tempting to a landlord—especially a poor one. M’Tavish was not rich, whatever might be his prospects in regard to the presidency of the bank.

His wife would have given something to have had his ear at the opposite orifice of the keyhole: so that she could have whispered “Take it!”

“How much, you ask, for the house furnished, and by the year?”

“Precisely so,” answered the stranger.

“Let me see!” answered M’Tavish, reflecting. “My own rent unfurnished—repairs covenanted in the lease—price of the furni-

ture—interest thereon—well, I could say two hundred pounds per annum.”

“I’ll take it at two hundred. Do you agree to that?”

The bank clerk was electrified with delight. Two hundred pounds a year would be cent.-per-cent. on his own outlay. Besides he would get rid of the premises, for at least one year, and along with them the proximity of his detestable neighbours. Any sacrifice to escape from this.

He would have let go house and grounds at half the price.

But he, the stranger, was not cunning, and M‘Tavish was shrewd. Seeing this, he not only adhered to the two hundred, but stipulated for the removal of some portion of his furniture.

“Only a few family pieces,” he said; “things that a tenant would not care to be troubled with.”

The stranger was not exacting, and the concession was made.

“Your name, sir?” asked the tenant intending to go out.

“Swinton,” answered the tenant who designed coming in. “Richard Swinton. Here is my card, Mr. M‘Tavish; and my reference is Lord ——.”

The bank clerk took the card into his trembling fingers. His wife, on the other side of the door, had a sensation in her ear resembling an electric shock.

A tenant with a lord—a celebrated lord—for his referee!

She could scarce restrain herself from shouting through the keyhole:

“Close with him, Mac!”

But Mac needed not the admonition. He had already made up his mind to the letting.

“How soon do you wish to come in?” he asked of the applicant.

“As soon as possible,” was the answer.
“To-morrow, if convenient to you.”

“To-morrow!” echoed the cool Scotchman, unaccustomed to such quick transactions, and somewhat surprised at the proposal.

“I own it’s rather unusual,” said the incoming tenant. “But, Mr. M’Tavish, I have a reason for wishing it so. It’s somewhat delicate; but as you are a married man, and the father of a family, I don’t mind giving you a hint of its nature. The fact is, my wife is near—you understand?”

“Perfectly!” pronounced the Scotch *paterfamilias*, his breast almost turning as tender as that of his better half, then sympathetically throbbing behind the partition door.

* * * * *

The sudden transfer was agreed to. Next day Mr. M’Tavish and his family moved out,

Mr. Swinton having signed the agreement, and given a check for the year's rent in advance—scarce necessary after being endorsed by such a distinguished referee.

CHAPTER XXXI.

A DRESS REHEARSAL.

THE revolutionary leader who had taken up his residence, *vis-à-vis* to the M'Tavish villa, and whose politics were so offensive to its royal lessee, was no other than the ex-dictator of Hungary.

The new tenant had been made aware of this before entering upon occupation. Not by his landlord, but the man under whose instructions he had taken the house.

The proximity of the refugee head-quarters was partly the cause of Mr. M'Tavish being so anxious to go out. It was the sole reason

why Swinton had shown himself so anxious to come in!

Swinton had this knowledge, and no more. The motive for putting him in possession had not yet been revealed to him. He had been instructed to take that particular house, *coûte que coûte*; and he had taken it as told, at a cost of two hundred pounds.

His patron had provided him with a check for three hundred. Two had gone into the pocket of M'Tavish; the other remained in his own.

He had got installed in his new domicile; and seated with a cigar between his lips—a real Havanna—was reflecting upon the comforts that surrounded him. How different that couch with its brocaded cover, and soft cushions, from the hard horse-hair sofa, with its flattened squab! How unlike these luxurious chairs to the sharp skeletons of cane, his wife had reason to remember!

While congratulating himself on the change of fortune, he was also bethinking him of what had led to it. He had a tolerably correct idea of *why* he had been so favoured.

But for what purpose he had been placed in the villa, or the duty there required of him, he was still ignorant.

He could only conjecture that he had something to do with Kossuth. Of this he was almost certain.

He was not to remain long in the dark about his duties. At an interview on the morning of that day, his patron had promised to send him full instructions—by a gentleman who should “come up in the course of the evening.”

Swinton was shrewd enough to have a thought as to who this gentlemen would be; and it inspired him to a conversation with his wife, of a nature peculiar as confidential.

“Fan!” he said, taking the cigar from his

teeth, and turning towards the couch, on which that amiable creature was reclining.

“Well; what is it?” responded she, also removing a weed from between her pretty lips, and pouting the smoke after it.

“How do you like our new lodgings, love? Better than those at Westbourne?”

“You don’t want me to answer that question, Dick?”

“Oh, no. Not if you don’t wish. But you needn’t snap and snarl so.”

“I am not snapping or snarling. It’s silly of you to say so.”

“Yes, everything’s silly I say; or do either. I’ve been very silly within the last three days. To get into a cozy crib like this, with the rent paid twelve months in advance, and a hundred pounds to keep the kitchen! More to come if I mistake not. Quite stupid of me to have accomplished all this!”

Fan made no rejoinder. Had her husband

closely scanned her countenance at that moment, he might have seen upon it a smile not caused by any admiration of his cleverness.

She had her own thoughts as to what and whom he was indebted for the favourable turn in his fortunes.

“Yes; much more to come,” said he, continuing the hopeful prognostic. “In fact, Fan, our fortune’s made, or will be, if you only do——”

“Do what?” she asked, seeing that he hesitated. “What do you want me to do next?”

“Well; in the first place,” drawled he, showing displeasure at her tone, “get up and dress yourself. I’ll tell you what I want afterwards.”

“Dress myself! There’s not much chance of that, with such rags as are left me!”

“Never mind the rags. We can’t help it

just now. Besides, love, you look well enough in anything."

Fan tossed her head, as if she cared little for the compliment.

"Arrange the rags, as you call 'em, best way you can for to-night. To-morrow, it will be different. We shall take a stroll among the milliners and mantua-makers. Now, girl, go do as I tell you!"

So encouraged, she rose from the couch, and turned towards the stairway that conducted to her sleeping apartment.

She commenced ascending.

"Put on your best looks, Fan!" said her husband, calling after her. "I expect a gentleman, who's a stranger to you; and I don't wish him to think I've married a slut. Make haste, and get down again. He may be in at any moment."

There was no response to show that the rude speech had given offence. Only a laugh,

sent back from the stair-landing, such as, at twilight, might be heard echoing along Burlington Arcade—at midnight, in the galleries of the “Argyll.”

Swinton resumed his cigar and sat waiting.

He knew not which would be heard first : a ring at the gate-bell, or the rustling of silk upon the stairway.

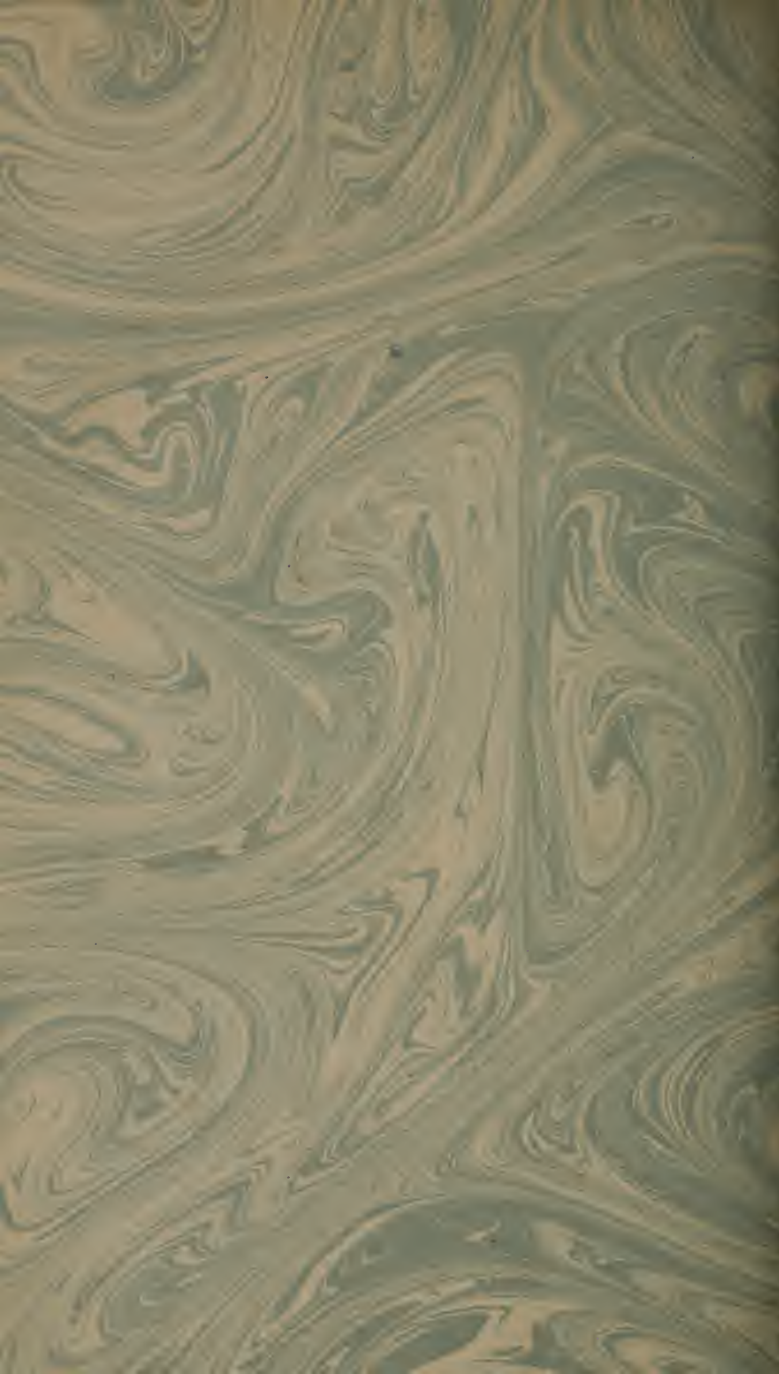
He desired the latter, as he had not yet completed the promised instructions.

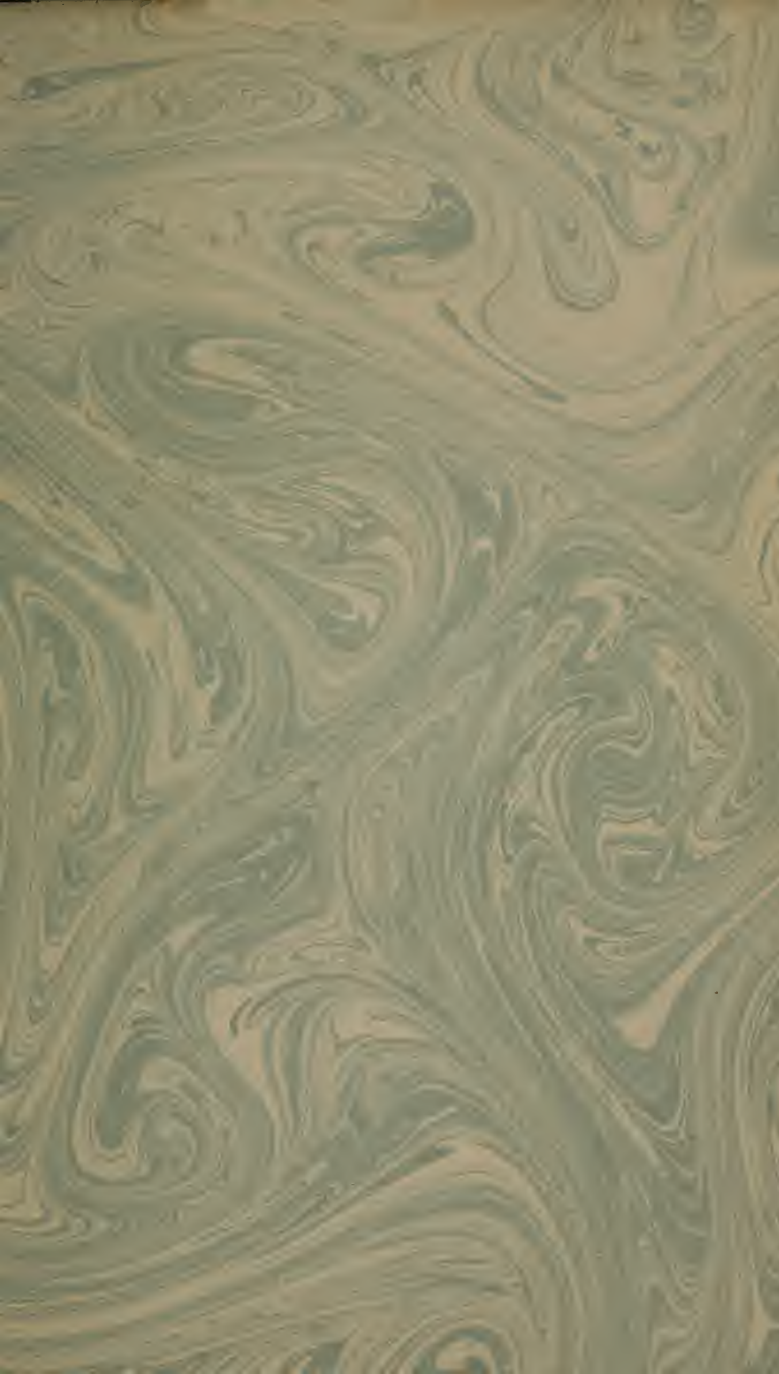
He had not much more to say, and a moment would suffice.

He was not disappointed : Fan came first. She came sweeping down-stairs, snowy with Spanish chalk, and radiant with rouge.

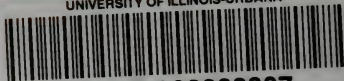
Without these she was beautiful, with them superb.

Long usage had made them almost a necessity to her skin ; but the same had taught her skill in their limning. Only a connoisseur could have distinguished the paint





UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA



3 0112 083838307